CHRIST
IN THE
GOSPELS

10.14.30

LIBRARY OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
PRINCETON, N. J.
PRESENTED BY
The Trustees, Western Theol. Sem.

BT 305 .E3 1930
Easton, Burton Scott, 1877-
1950.
Christ in the Gospels

CHRIST IN THE GOSPELS

HALE LECTURES

NEW HORIZONS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH. By the Rev. Frederick C. Grant, S.T.D. 1928.

SOME ASPECTS OF CONTEMPORARY GREEK ORTHODOX THOUGHT. By the Rev. Frank Gavin, M.A., Ph.D., Th.D. 1921.

THE ETHIOPIC LITURGY. By the Rev. S. A. B. Mercer, Ph.D., Professor at the Western Theological Seminary. 1915.

BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES IN SCOTTISH CHURCH HISTORY. By the Rt. Rev. Anthony Mitchell, D.D., late Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney. 1913.

THE NATIONAL CHURCH OF SWEDEN. By the Rt. Rev. John Wordsworth, D.D., late Bishop of Salisbury. 1910.

CHURCH HYMNS AND CHURCH MUSIC. By Peter C. Lutkin, Mus.D., A.G.O. 1908.

BOOKS BY BURTON SCOTT EASTON

THE REAL JESUS
Co-author with Bishop Charles Fiske

THE GOSPEL BEFORE THE GOSPELS

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE

CHRIST AND HIS TEACHING

TEACHING OF ST. PAUL

THE HALE LECTURES, 1929-30

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
OCT 14 1930
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

CHRIST IN THE GOSPELS

By

BURTON SCOTT EASTON, S.T.D.

Professor of the Literature and Interpretation of the New Testament,
The General Theological Seminary, New York

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
NEW YORK · LONDON
1930

Copyright, 1930, by
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

Printed in the United States of America

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	THE SYNOPTIC SOURCES	1
II.	THE PRE-SYNOPTIC TRADITION	28
III.	THE NON-SYNOPTIC TRADITION	57
IV.	THE BACKGROUND	83
V.	JESUS AND THE LAW	109
VI.	JESUS AND THE FATHER	132
VII.	JESUS AND THE KINGDOM	154
VIII.	JESUS	175
	INDEX OF SUBJECTS	201
	INDEX OF NAMES	202
	INDEX OF TEXTS	203

FOREWORD

The present volume contains the Hale Lectures for 1929–1930.

Among the alternative lecture subjects specified by Bishop Hale in his bequest was "Contemporaneous Church History: *i. e.*, treating of events happening since the beginning of what is called 'The Oxford Movement,' in 1833." In accordance, in honoring me with the invitation to deliver the lectures the Hale Committee specified "The Progress and Results of Gospel Research." This subject, indeed, belongs in the highest degree to contemporaneous Church History. In 1833 a truly historical study of the Gospels scarcely existed at all. It is really only within the present generation that in Church circles we have learned to accept the bearing of literary Synoptic analysis on historical problems, and have begun to treat the Fourth Gospel as essentially different from the Synoptics. Such vital "background" subjects as knowledge of the apocalyptic literature and critical use of Talmudic sources have arisen and developed within the memory of every one who has attained his two score years and ten. And the latest discipline of all, the scientific investigation of the pre-Synoptic tradition—somewhat misnamed "form criticism"—has hardly completed the first decade of its existence.

The accumulation of material is so overwhelming that, within the allotted space, little detailed treatment of the development of these various currents was possible. But I have tried to indicate the chief problems as they exist to-day and, at least, to indicate the most probable solutions.

BURTON SCOTT EASTON.

CHRIST IN THE GOSPELS

I. THE SYNOPTIC SOURCES

The work of the Church in the study of the Gospels is an historical task, and as such must be based on historical considerations alone. We may be confident that our use of the results of historical research may be endlessly fruitful for apologetic purposes, but to mingle apologetic motives with historical in the research itself is to destroy both apologetics and history. Hesitancy in this regard has been unfortunately common in what is called "reverent Gospel criticism," and its results have been nothing less than disastrous. It has carried with it in many minds the conviction that Christian reverence can be preserved only at the cost of intellectual integrity, and so has led to a suspicion—more widespread than we like to realize—that if the Gospels are outside of historical relations, then the events narrated in the Gospels are outside of history. In the modern world from the assertion that the Gospels are sacrosanct entities it is only a step to the assertion that Jesus is a myth.

Our responsibility, consequently, is unspeakably serious. So we find it disconcerting to remember how very recently serious Gospel criticism made its entry into English-speaking, and, more specifically, Anglican theology. It is only a little over thirty years since the publication of Plummer's *St. Luke*, widely hailed then as the most representative English commentary on the Gospel, but to-day, as we turn over its pages, we find ourselves in a world almost unknown to the modern theological student. Yet even before 1896 good beginnings had already been made in England and America, especially by such students as were in touch with the infinitely franker German research, and by the end of the nineteenth century acknowledgment was general of the fundamental fact of Synoptic science, the priority of Mark and the utilization of Mark by Matthew and Luke. We find this, for instance, virtually conceded by so very conservative a scholar as H. B. Swete in Section VI of his preface to his commentary.[1]

The second cornerstone of Synoptic work, the existence of the Sayings source, which in its reconstructed form we call "Q," was admitted more slowly and only—as was perfectly proper—after much experimenting. Even in the *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*[2] we find hesitation, but the general trend of opinion has moved irresistibly toward the acknowledgment of this source, and we may hope that Canon Streeter's summing up in his *The Four Gospels*[3] has closed the question in its broader outlines.

Canon Streeter likewise has probably convinced most English speaking students of the Gospels of the existence of a third source underlying Luke;

---

[1] *The Gospel according to St. Mark;* London, Macmillan, 1898: 2d ed., 1902.

[2] Oxford Press, 1911.

[3] London, Macmillan, 1925.

this source is designated "L." And the very able independent work of Dr. Vincent Taylor [4] and Dr. William Manson [4a] has given powerful corroboration to this conclusion. It is possible, therefore, to summarize the results achieved thus far, and to indicate the problems that still remain unsolved.

The earliest of the Synoptists is Mark, which was used substantially in its present form by Luke and Matthew. The only real literary questions here are raised by the word "substantially." Were there various editions of the Second Gospel? Did Luke and Matthew—or either of them—use an earlier form than that which we now have? The question is discussed most thoroughly in English by Dr. B. W. Bacon,[5] but for detailed treatment the student must be referred to the German writers. The most complete case for the unity and integrity of Mark is still that of Bernard Weiss,[6] while his son, Johannes Weiss, argued consistently that virtually all details peculiar to Mark are the work of a later editor.[7]

Of a different sort are the attempts to analyze Mark into major underlying documents. Here it is enough to mention two such proposals. One is Dr. Eduard Meyer's *Die Evangelien*,[8] the other the first volume of Dr. Wilhelm Bussmann's *Synoptische Studien.*[9] Despite various agreements in matters of detail, the divergencies between these writers are too serious to establish much confidence in the method. So a more promising solution of acknowledged difficulties lies in the hypothesis of Mark's use of comparatively small tradition cycles —written or oral—which he has none too skilfully edited for his own purposes; this is the theory of the "form-critics."

---

[4] *Behind the Third Gospel*, Oxford Press, 1926.

[4a] *The Gospel of Luke*, London, Hodder; New York, Smith, 1930.

[5] Especially in his *The Gospel of Mark*, Yale Press, 1925.

[6] Most fully in his *Die Quellen des Lukas Evangeliums*, Stuttgart, Cotta, 1907, but his commentary on Mark in the Meyer series (9th edition, Göttingen, Vandenhoek, 1901) still deserves serious study.

[7] Especially in his *Das älteste Evangelium*, Göttingen, Vandenhoek, 1903.

[8] Stuttgart, Cotta, 1921.

In estimating the date of Mark the phenomena of chapter 13 tie us up to a time close to the fall of Jerusalem; this is almost universally acknowledged. Rome as the place of writing is also generally accepted, and the evidence is elaborately set forth in Dr. Bacon's *Is Mark a Roman Gospel?*[10] As to Mark's general aim there is likewise little dissent nowadays. However extensive may be the Petrine sources in the Gospel, the best adjective to describe the work as a whole is "Pauline." Mark edits and arranges his material to set forth the following doctrines: The Messiahship of Jesus was in no sense a Messiahship "according to the flesh." All Jewish expectations were wrong, even—or particularly— those of Peter and the rest. Peter's confession was inadequate, and at the higher vision of the Transfiguration he remained earthbound. The Twelve as a whole remained incomprehending throughout the later ministry, from the time when they "understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened,"[11] to the time when "they all left him and fled"[12]—except Peter who lingered only to deny his Master. Of James and the other "brethren of the Lord" Mark gives us an even more sorry picture. They regarded him as insane and tried to lay hold on him,[13] and refused so obstinately to believe that Jesus said "a prophet is not without honor, save among his own kin, and in his own house."[14] So he was forced to disown his family utterly and publicly.[15] What such statements meant to second generation Christians is obvious: whatever association James or Cephas or John[16] may have had with Jesus in the past mattered no more to Mark than to St. Paul;[17] God accepts no man's person. In consequence the Gospel which Jesus preached transcended all Jewish limitations. As he prepared to leave forever his Galilean ministry, he pronounced all meats clean,[18] and proceeded to confer on Gentile soil the benefits he had bestowed in Galilee, even to the miraculous feeding.[19] As a further consequence the figure of Jesus as presented in Mark is from beginning to end unceasingly the supernatural Son of God, a figure in this world but never really belonging to it; one who must be constantly on his guard lest his true nature be discovered.[20]

---

[9] Halle, Waisenhaus, 1925.

[10] Harvard Press, 1919.

---

[11] Mark 6:52.

[12] Mark 14:50.

[13] Mark 3:21, where "his friends" in the Revised Version should be "his family."

[14] Mark 6:4.

[15] Mark 3:31–35.

[16] Who does not come off very well in his only personal appearance in Mark 9:38 ff.

[17] Gal. 2:6.

[18] Mark 7:19.

[19] Mark 7:24–8:26.

Thus far Mark's "Paulinism" reached. But at the same time we must recognize that Mark falls far short of what St. Paul himself taught. There is no need to enter into details here,[21] and it is enough at this point to note that the supernatural Messiah in Mark is by no means the same as the preexistent Lord in St. Paul. What interests us at the present moment is that, while Mark edits and annotates his tradition, he does not rewrite his tradition: that the material he preserves is capable of interpretations very different from his own.[22] In other words, when we distinguish between Mark and the material used by Mark, we move back a notable stage into the earlier "common" Christian tradition.

The name of "Mark" as the author of the Gospel has not been successfully impugned by criticism. Mark's obscurity in the New Testament—not to mention the discreditable episode of Acts 13:13—makes him a most unlikely patron for a later pseudonymous writer. Moreover, what we know about Mark corroborates the evidence from the Gospel itself. In his early days he was very familiar with Peter[23] but while still a young man he entered the Gentile mission. Despite his breach with St. Paul he continued in that mission,[24] and in later days we find him once more in full favor with the apostle.[25] It is just this combination of an early "conservative" environment followed by a life of activity for "liberalism" that would give the Gospel its outlook.

---

[20] Mark 1:24 f., etc.

[21] The material is fully collected in Martin Werner's *Der Einfluss paulinischer Theologie im Markusevangelium*, Giessen, Töpelmann, 1923.

[22] E. g., Matt. 15:1–20 successfully avoids the radical deduction in Mark simply by omitting Mark's note in 7:19b and by adding at the close, "But to eat with unwashen hands defileth not the man," thus keeping the application of Jesus' words strictly to the matter in hand.

Turning next to the Sayings source. All investigation of this source must start from the construction of Q by the rules, "All non-Markan material in which Luke and Matthew agree closely," and, "Luke's order normally to be preferred." Probably the most convenient form of the reconstruction, with only enough emendation to choose between phrases given differently in Luke and Matthew, is Harnack's *Sayings of Jesus*,[26] although Mr. J. M. C. Crum's *The Original Jerusalem Gospel*[27] is also very useful. The substantial unity of the source so recovered, in outlook, style and vocabulary, is so familiar that attempts to resolve Q into further written sources[28] do not seem hope-ful. But other questions remain. To assume that the reconstructed Q is identical with the original source itself would be to assume a critical miracle. Just as there are parts of Mark which neither of the other Synoptists cared to copy, so there may very well be parts of the Sayings that were similarly omitted; these are of course hopelessly lost. More practical is the problem of the parts of the Sayings that were copied by Luke or Matthew alone. In the first thirteen verses of Luke's eleventh chapter, for instance, we find the Lord's Prayer, followed by the parable of the importunate friend, followed by sayings on insistence in prayer. These three sections together make a well-rounded whole and, in particular, the words, "Ask and it shall be given to you . . . knock and it shall be opened unto you," take up and apply the parable admirably. In Matthew the Lord's Prayer and the sayings about prayer likewise occur[29] and so are duly included in all reconstructions of Q, while the parable, not found in Matthew, is omitted from these reconstructions. But the Matthæan excerpts are in the Sermon on the Mount, in a context that debarred the use of parables; hence it is surely justifiable to argue that Luke's parable was just as much a part of the original source as the sections that precede and follow. As far as Luke is concerned, similar considerations tell for the presence in the Sayings of at least Luke 10:17–20, 11:21 f., 12:13–21, 13:31–33, 15:8–10.

---

[23] Acts 12:12.

[24] Acts 15:39.

[25] Col. 4:10. II Tim. 4:11 is also evidence, whether Pauline or not.

[26] London, Williams & Norgate; New York, Putnam, 1908. Translated from *Sprüche und Reden Jesu*, Leipsic, Hinrichs, 1907.

[27] London & New York, Macmillan, 1927.

[28] *E. g.*, Dr. W. Bussmann's *Synoptische Studien: II: Zur Redenquelle*, Halle, Waisenhaus, 1929.

---

[29] Matt. 6:9–13, 7:7–11.

The problem of Matthew's individual use of the source is more complicated. Characteristic of this Gospel is the presence of five large "discourses," each closing with the phrase, "And it came to pass when Jesus had finished": The Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7), the mission charge (10:5–42), the parables (13:3–52), the chapter on humility (18), and the eschatological discourse (24–25); to these we should probably add as a sixth similar element the anti-Pharisaic denunciations (23), despite the lack of the usual closing formula. The attention of English scholars in particular has been closely directed to these sayings and we find, *e. g.*, Dr. W. C. Allen maintaining that these six sections—less Matthæan notes—and a few other fragments made up an original "Book of Sayings." [30] A mediating theory is that of Dr. Streeter, who subtracts the Q verses from these sections and then includes the remainder as a special source "M." [31] But before we can analyze this theory it is necessary to speak of Luke's special source, L.

As long ago as 1907 Bernard Weiss printed in full a reconstruction of the Greek text of L [32] that ought to serve as the starting point for every investigator in this field.[33] He argued with great cogency for the homogeneity of this source, showing that in L we have unity of vocabulary, style, geographical and religious outlook. Almost simultaneously with this book of Weiss' Dr. Harnack published his celebrated *Lukas der Arzt*,[34] which investigated the special material in the Third Gospel from an entirely different standpoint. He felt he could even assign as author—or as collector and reviser of this tradition—a well-known New Testament character, Philip the Evangelist. The material is written in Jewish Greek—and Philip was a Palestinian Hellenist. Its interests are in southern Palestine rather than Galilee—and it was in southern Palestine that Philip worked. Its affection for Samaritans is well known—and Philip was the first missionary to Samaria. It ignores the Gentile mission almost entirely—and, as far as we know, Philip's work was all in Palestine. It is pervaded by a burning zeal for poverty—and Philip was one of the seven so-called "deacons." It shows a marked feminine influence—and Philip had a large family of daughters. And, finally, one of the "we" sections of Acts[35] brings Philip and Luke into personal contact! It is very rare in the thorny field of New Testament criticism that we meet such a convergent series of probabilities.

---

[30] *St. Matthew*, Edinburgh, Clark; New York, Scribners, 1907. Dr. Allen prints the Greek text of the source as he reconstitutes it in *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*, Clarendon Press, 1911, pages 233–286.

[31] *The Four Gospels*, pages 223–270. Dr. Streeter, however, regards the "discourses" in Matthew as agglomerations formed by the editor.

[32] *Die Quellen der synoptischen Überlieferung*, Leipsic, Hinrichs.

[33] An expectation that, unfortunately, is rarely fulfilled.

The general unity of L is, I believe, proved.[36]

---

[34] Leipsic, Hinrichs, 1906. English translation *Luke the Physician*, London, Williams & Norgate; New York, Putnam, 1907.

[35] Acts 21:8–15.

[36] I have given my reasons in my *St. Luke*, Edinburgh, Clark; New York, Scribners, 1926.

The only problem of great consequence is whether or not the Infancy sections were part of L or were taken by Luke from some other document. Most English scholars prefer the second alternative, but thus far no demonstration of a difference in style between these sections and the rest of L has been offered. Other literary problems are less significant. The justification of including this or that section in L always deserves detailed attention, while the original order of the sections needs closer study than it has yet received.

A comparison of L with Mark shows that the two documents had more or less the same general form. Both give an account of Jesus' ministry composed of brief sayings-groups, parables and dialogs, and both conclude with an account of the Passion: this is what we should expect. L, however, contains fewer "historical" sections than Mark, is less interested in detailed accounts of the miracles, and contains a much larger proportion of sayings. L seems to have been somewhat shorter than Mark, but we naturally do not know how much Luke omitted. Its Passion narrative—in contradistinction from Matthew's—is wholly independent of Mark's, although Luke has here and there inserted Markan verses. The apocalyptic passage in Luke 21—to clear this of additions taken by Luke from Mark is very easy—gives us an intensely interesting glimpse into Palestinian conditions, and also enables us to date L with some security. When we read the prediction that in persecution, "Not a hair of your head shall perish; by your endurance ye shall win your lives,"[37] we realize that we are dealing with a church in which martyrdoms are practically unknown.[38] On the other hand the shadow of the approaching war with Rome dominates the chapter, which centres in the warning to Christians not to trust in any divine protection of Jerusalem, but to flee from the doomed city as the enveloping troops approach.[39] We are thus brought to a date in the fifties or the very early sixties, when the deaths of Stephen and James the Zebedee lay well in the past and that of James of Jerusalem was still to come. To argue that Luke 21:20 ff. must be a *vaticinium post eventum* because these verses describe in general terms what actually took place is to ignore Palestinian conditions during the decade or more preceding the outbreak of the year 66. Everyone realized the imminence of war, and the Zealots were stirring up men's courage by proclaiming the inviolability of the holy city. To the Christians, on the other hand, "the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified," [40] was a city doomed to certain destruction. Nor were the Christians alone in their foreboding. The lengthy speech warning the Jews against resorting to war, which Josephus puts into the mouth of Agrippa II,[41] is of course artificial, but it certainly expresses what countless Jews must have been thinking.

---

[37] Luke 21:18–19.

[38] Luke (21:16) endeavored to reconcile the statement with Mark 13:12, "And brother shall deliver up brother to death," etc., and with the Christian experience of Luke's own day by the mechanical compromise, "And they shall kill *some* of you."

[39] Luke 21:20, 21b. 21:21a has been added by Luke from Mark.

[40] Rev. 11:8.

L, consequently, is not only more Palestinian than Mark but, as a written document, it is earlier. But this does not imply that its tradition is universally better; the relative historical value of the two sources must be studied section by section. In such a passage as the healing of the woman with an infirmity[42] we have a story much more artlessly told than a parallel in Mark,[43] but in the story of the ten lepers[44] it would be hard to deny that moralizing piety has gotten the better of a merely historical interest.

When we compare L with the Sayings we undertake a more difficult problem, for—to begin with—we are not certain of the original extent of either document. So the first question must be, Do these sources overlap?—a question that has not been asked often enough or insistently enough.

Take, for instance, the passage Luke 6:27–38. Nearly all the material in this paragraph occurs also in Matt. 5, usually in so close a linguistic approximation that reconstructions of Q almost invariably include it.[45] And, undoubtedly, the hypothesis of a common Greek original is temptingly simple here—if we merely take the verses one by one as isolated units. But if we probe a little more deeply, and ask why Luke and Matthew present these verses in such an entirely different order, we can find no ready answer. If we probe still a little more deeply, we observe that in Luke there are three closely knit little paragraphs. Four clauses in vv. 27–28 are balanced by four clauses in vv. 29–30, with a summary in v. 31. Verses 32–34 are in close parallelism with a similar summary in v. 35. And an introductory theme in v. 36 receives a fourfold elaboration in vv. 37–38a—with v. 38b obviously irrelevant to the context. Now, whoever formed these paragraphs, it was not Luke, who—apart from all difficulties in writing Semitic parallelism—would never have included on his own initiative the very Jewish v. 34, which makes money lending a virtue in which even the worldly man cannot expect to receive more than the amount of his loan once more; if these little paragraphs are not sayings of Jesus as they stand, they could have been formed only in highly Jewish-Christian circles. But in Matt. 5 we have an equally close-knit structure and one equally Jewish, elaborating the correct observance of the Law as against scribal perversions; it is critically out of the question to suppose that the First Evangelist[46] developed this out of an original such as we read in Luke. So we can only conclude that Luke and Matthew here do not draw from a direct common source, but that each Evangelist uses his own. Stylistic evidence identifies Luke's sources as L; Matthew's source will be our next problem.

---

[41] *BJ*, II, xvi.

[42] Luke 13:10–17.

[43] Mark 3:1–6.

[44] Luke 17:11–19.

[45] So, for instance, even in Dr. Streeter's *The Four Gospels*, page 291, despite his two additional sources L and M.

---

[46] Whose own notes are evident here and there throughout the chapter.

We should observe very carefully that Luke certainly knew more of the Sayings source than he has actually used. The structure of his own "Sermon" in 6:20–49 shows obvious sutures: the transition at v. 27a is about as awkward as can be imagined, while the abrupt "And he spake also a parable to them" at v. 39 is not much better. When we note, moreover, that beginning with v. 41 Luke's agreement with Matthew is so close that a Sayings basis is wholly certain, the facts seem clear enough. Luke had before him the Sayings form that underlies Matt. 5–7.[47] But, since this is based on a contrast between true and scribal morality, Luke deemed it unsuitable for his readers and replaced the first part of it from a parallel in L, linking over into the Sayings by the transition verses 6:39–40. Moreover, since the Sayings form of the "Sermon" began with the Beatitudes, Luke likewise prefixed a version of the Beatitudes which in L did not stand with the paragraph in Luke 6:27–38. Nor is this theory merely plausible conjecture: in 16:17–18 Luke reproduces two verses unmistakably from the part of the Sayings omitted in his sixth chapter.

---

[47] Containing approximately Matt. 5:3–12, 17–18, 19, 21–22, 27–28, 31–48 (6:1–6, 16–18), 7:1–5, 12, 15–18, 20–21, 24–27.

Matthew's form of the Sermon, consequently, is based on the Sayings; Luke's is based partly on the Sayings, partly on L. Such a passage as Matt. 5:33–37, then, is a part of the Sayings which Matthew used and Luke did not.[48] Dr. Streeter's "M" source, therefore, becomes superfluous, unless it can be shown that M has a vocabulary, style and outlook of its own—and this, I believe, cannot be shown; M would seem to be nothing more than the portions of the Sayings used by the First Evangelist alone.[49]

So in attempting a reconstruction of the Sayings the investigator should lay the First Gospel under heavy contribution. After removing from it the Markan passages and those clearly due to the Evangelist himself, what remains should be regarded as having a certain *a priori* claim to inclusion in the Sayings. The dimensions of this document, then, would be considerably greater than the usual versions of Q.[50]

The Sayings and L, accordingly, while coinciding—as is naturally to be expected—in many individual words of Jesus, and while giving these words in more or less the same Greek rendition, represent separate traditions. It is L that preserves to us the most exquisite parables of Jesus, as well as other sections of priceless worth.[51] None the less, when L's version of Jesus' words conflicts with the Sayings, the latter is generally to be preferred. For instance, Luke 12:32–34 reads: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. Sell that which ye have and give alms; make for yourselves purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief draweth near, neither moth destroyeth; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The corresponding section in the Sayings (Matt. 6:19–21) reads: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." It takes no critical acumen to perceive the originality of the latter form. Jesus taught that the Kingdom was at hand, certainly, but not *immediately* at hand. The earliest Jerusalem church, however, preached the extreme imminence of the parousia and, as a result, practised a reckless communistic ethic; this Jerusalem experience has left its stamp on L in a thoroughgoing interim ethic. It is the same influence that explains the difference between the Beatitudes in Matthew (the

---

[48] The technical Jewish casuistry as to oaths would have been meaningless to Luke's Gentile readers.

[49] *I. e.*, very roughly speaking, Q + M = the Sayings.

[50] This is the theory constantly urged by Bernard Weiss; first set forth in full in his *Matthäus-Evangelium* (1876) and repeated with little variation in his *Quellen der synoptischen Überlieferung* (1908). His endeavors to include altogether too much in the source, however, prevented his arguments from winning the respect they deserved.

---

[51] *E. g.*, the basis of Luke 7:36–50.

Sayings) and Luke (L). It is a commonplace to say that in the former the conditions pronounced blessed are spiritual, in the latter material, but this commonplace is only half the truth. In L salvation is promised only to a particular group of poor, hungry and afflicted persons, a group hated, excommunicated and reviled for "the Son of Man's sake." In other words, the Beatitudes are made to apply to the Christian church in Palestine.

It may be observed also that the Christology of L is more developed than that of the Sayings. Where Matt. 10:20 reads, "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you," we find in Luke 21:15, "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay." That is, the action of the Spirit is made explicitly the action of the exalted Son of Man.

We come next to a very important question, the relation between the Sayings and Mark. And, in the first place, did Mark use the Sayings? [52] Now, the Sayings document was regarded in the early church as highly authoritative, as is shown by the respect paid it by writers of such different outlook as Luke and Matthew. Its material, generally speaking, is more primitive than Mark's.[53] So there would be nothing inherently improbable about Mark's using the document.

---

[52] This question must not take the form, "Did Mark use Q?" for the very definition of Q excludes the presence of Markan material in it.

[53] Compare the next chapter.

More concretely, the Synoptic relations in the account of the Baptist's preaching cannot be explained by supposing that Luke and Matthew supplemented Mark from an independent account in the Sayings, for both Evangelists continue their "Markan" material closing with "he shall baptize you in holy spirit" with the words "and fire, whose fan is in his hand,"[54] etc. Now the Sayings certainly did not contain an "independent" paragraph beginning in midair like this, and the only satisfactory supposition is that Mark abbreviated what the other Evangelists give in full. Or compare the prediction of the persecutions in Mark 13:9–10 with Matt. 10:17–18 and Luke 12:11–12. Here the later Evangelists agree in both position (outside the apocalyptic discourse) and wording against Mark, while the more primitive character of the Matthæan version as contrasted with the Markan is self-evident.

To use an argument of a different kind, investigators have given insufficient attention to the fact that Luke and Matthew, despite their differences in structure, both insert the Sermon on the Mount immediately after their parallels to Mark 3:7–13. Why so remarkable a coincidence? And why is Mark 3:13 so hopelessly obscure? The easiest answer is that the Sayings contained a description of the crowds, the ascent into the "mountain," and the Sermon; all our Synoptists used the passage, while the roughness in Mark is due to his omission of the Sermon. If this answer is correct, we might push it a step further. The other "discourses" in Matthew all have more or less embryonic parallels in Mark.[55] Now most scholars—there are notable exceptions—hold that these Markan sections are the originals, which Matthew enlarged from the Sayings and elsewhere. But this explanation may be too simple. In the case of the eschatology we have just seen that Matt. 10 contains elements earlier than Mark 13; similarly the mission charge in Matt. 10 is partly more primitive than the parallel in Mark 6. The result is of course a problem of great complexity that certainly will always defy final solution, but we should not forget that the problem exists.

---

[54] Compare Luke 3:16 f. = Matt. 3:11 f. with Mark 1:8.

To carry the research still a step further, we are bound to ask if the "Sayings" may not have contained something more than "sayings"; whether some of the narrative material in Mark may not rest on Sayings antecedents. The only real critical tool we can use here is provided by the agreements of the Third and First Gospels against the Second in Markan passages. In my *St. Luke* I called these agreements "Luke-Matt. contacts," and I trust the list I have given of them is sufficiently adequate. The results appear, on the whole, to be negative, and yet the question will not down. We cannot, for instance, penetrate from the literary standpoint behind Mark's story of Jesus' baptism, but we find it hard to believe that the Sayings, which gave the Baptist's preaching and Jesus' temptation, passed over the essential connecting link between the two. Presumably Mark followed the Sayings so closely here that his narrative has—so to speak—absorbed the tradition completely.

---

[55] In the case of the anti-Pharisaic denunciations the Markan parallel is only three verses long (Mark 12:38–40).

There is, accordingly, still much work to be done on the restoration of the Sayings, and future research may well give us a more accurate idea of the document than we have at present. Yet I do not believe that our conception of it will be greatly changed, for the mechanically reconstructed and familiar Q seems very fairly typical of the whole. And the name "Sayings" is assuredly just, for such "historical" paragraphs as it may have embodied were certainly not numerous, and were included for the sake simply of important words of Jesus; compare the healing of the centurion's servant. The arrangement was roughly topical, and it closed with the apocalyptic material common to Luke 17 and Matt. 24, perhaps ending finally with the promise in Luke 22:28–30 = Matt. 19:28. The story of the centurion's servant indicates an interest in the Gentile mission, but goes no further in the direction of "Paulinism"; otherwise there is no evidence that the first editor of the Sayings was at all concerned with any special tendency within Christianity.

Of late years Wellhausen's rather isolated criticism of the Sayings as words of Jesus has been taken up in a less extreme form by such able scholars as Dr. Loisy and Dr. Bultmann, but without any perceptible strengthening of the negative case.[56] The passage most debated is the famous "great thanksgiving" in Luke 10: 21–22 = Matt. 11:25–27, and even in this the one really suspicious phrase is "no man knoweth the Father but the Son." This phrase is "Johannine" in the extremest sense of the term, as being not only unlike Jesus but quite un-Jewish as well. The early patristic citations, however, show that this particular phrase is textually insecure, and if it be omitted the passage is entirely suited to the context.[57]

The date of a document so objective as the Sayings is most difficult to determine, except by the argument that its very objectivity points to an extremely early Christian origin. In Luke 11:51 = Matt. 23:35 "Abel" and "Zechariah" are simply the first and last martyrs in the Old Testament,[58] while "the son of Barachiah" in Matthew is the Evangelist's confusion of this Zechariah with the prophet.[59] Consequently the death of Zechariah, the son of Baris (Bariscaeus? Baruch?) in Josephus [60] has nothing to do with the case; no Christian writer would have closed his list of martyrs with a post-Christian Jew who did not accept Christianity.

---

[56] In the case of Dr. Loisy—notably in his *L'Évangile selon Luc*, Paris, Nourry, 1924,—I must confess to an inability to understand his arguments.

[57] Contrast, however, Dr. Rawlinson's *The New Testament Doctrine of the Christ*, London, Longmans, 1926, pages 251–264.

[58] Gen. 4:8 and II Chron. 24:21; the Hebrew canon closes the Old Testament with II Chron.

[59] Zech. 1:1.

[60] *BJ*, IV, v, 4; the event took place 68–69 A. D.

As the author of the Sayings the case for Matthew is really strong. It is quite true that when Papias said "Matthew wrote the logia," he had in mind not the Sayings but our present First Gospel. Yet Papias had a tradition that Matthew wrote *something*, and his wrong identification of Matthew's work does not debar us from attempting a better conjecture. Why does our First Gospel bear Matthew's name? Matthew is so inconspicuous in the New Testament that we know just about nothing at all concerning him; not even quite surely that he was the Levi of Mark 2:14 = Luke 5:27. To suppose that his name is attached to our Gospel because he was the author of its actually apostolic source appears to be about the only supposition that explains the facts.[61]

Papias tells us, moreover, that "everyone interpreted" Matthew's work "as he was able"; *i. e.*, that Matthew supplied an extreme minimum of commentary. This describes the Sayings admirably. Papias adds that Matthew wrote in the "Hebrew" (*i. e.*, "Aramaic") tongue. As a description of the First Gospel this is impossible, but Aramaic glimmers through the Greek of the Sayings in almost every line.

---

[61] A persistently recurring theory that identifies the "logia" with a collection of Old Testament prophecies overlooks the fact that the prophetic element in the First Gospel is very small; much too small to give the name to the whole.

There remain for our consideration only the completed First and Third Gospels. The former's ideal of Christianity is a Jewish observance where the "scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses' seat" (Matt. 23:2). So Christian duty is conceived as a new law, supplementing and explaining Moses' doctrine. Yet the two are not put on the same plane. "He who shall do and teach these least commandments shall be called great in the Kingdom" —unquestionably. And "he who shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom"—undoubtedly.[62] Yet, after all, "*in* the Kingdom," even though "least" there; if the "greater" commandments are observed, some Mosaic precepts may be deliberately rejected without loss of salvation. So the Evangelist can give the Gentile mission his whole-hearted approval,[63] even though he longs to make the Gentiles into full Jews, and even though still more his heart's desire and his supplication to God is for Israel.

The reference in 22:7 to the destruction of Jerusalem as a past event puts the Gospel unequivocally after 70, as does "*a* holy place" in 24:15 (eliminating any reference to the temple). The probable reference to gnosticism in 24:11–12 points to the last two decades of the century. At so late a date such very Jewish Christianity could hardly have existed outside Palestine.[63a] Of the personality of the Evangelist we know nothing.

---

[62] Matt. 5:19.

[63] Matt. 8:11f, 24:14, 28:19.

It is difficult to extract from the Third Gospel much knowledge of Luke's purpose other than he sets forth in his little preface. But from Acts we gain a very fair portrait of the man as more than something of an ecclesiastic, with a passion for correct organization and for respectful submission to authority. These traits he even carries over into his picture of St. Paul, who is made anxiously subservient to the other apostles and even to Jewish tradition; there is nothing in Acts that conflicts with the bland assurance of the Jerusalem elders that "thou thyself also walkest orderly, keeping the law."[64] It is in accord with this that Luke eliminates Mark's acuter reproaches of the Twelve more rigorously than does Matthew,[65] while his references to the Gentile mission[66] are less explicit than those in the First Gospel. Primarily, no doubt, this is due to a closer adherence to the sources, but in any case the assumed "Paulinism" of Luke is a myth.

The date of Acts turns around whether or not the Theudas of 5:36 is due to a misreading of Josephus.[67] If so, Acts must have been written after 93, and the Gospel presumably not very long before. We may ask, however, if by this time Luke's interest in the subservience of Gentile to Jewish Christianity would not have been antiquated, and it may be that Luke and Josephus used a common source.[68] But I doubt if we can carry the Third Gospel back much before 85; at any rate, since neither Matthew nor Luke uses the other's work, the two Gospels are presumably nearly contemporary.

[63a] Yet Ignatius of Antioch was worried by "Judaizing."

[64] Acts 21:24.

[65] *E. g.*, Matt. 16:23 reproduces Mark 8:33, but Luke does not.

[66] Luke 2:32, 14:23, 24:47.

[67] *Antt.*, XX, v, 1.

Discussions as to the personality of "Luke" are endless and inconclusive.

Such are the main achievements thus far of the Church's work in the study of the Gospels as literary and historical documents, with certain suggestions as to the lines most promising for future advance. The student must never forget, however, that in Synoptic research, as in all other scientific investigation, the future must always rest firmly on the past, that mastery of the results of contemporary scholarship should invariably precede any attempt at independent progress. The great bane of Gospel scholarship in English is a persistent output of books by students who offer us wholly new solutions of the Synoptic problem—books that are never heard of again. Let the student first win his spurs by proving that he really understands the reasons for the present general acceptance of the Two Document theory; if he has conscientiously covered the amount of laborious and detailed examination needed before he can assert this independent understanding, then the chances are very much against his believing in a special vocation to teach Synoptic specialists the A. B. C.s of their subject.

---

[68] The hypothesis of an earlier Theudas, also an unsuccessful revolutionary, seems hardly helpful.

II. THE PRE-SYNOPTIC TRADITION*

IF WE COULD imagine the literary analysis of the Synoptists to be complete, we should be by no means at the end of our historical task. What was the nature of the tradition that lay behind the documents? And how accurately does this tradition reproduce the original events? Even with our imperfect literary resolution of the Gospels, these questions are very pressing; we must endeavor to push back through the written sources to the oral teaching that lies behind them.

In the nineteenth century, no doubt, we heard much about the primitive oral tradition; as in Westcott's *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels* (1860). This tradition, however, was constructed more or less by adding together all the details in all our Gospels, and so presupposing a lengthy narrative which the Evangelists merely excerpted, each in his own way. How such a narrative was formed, how it was preserved, and—above all—what relation it had to the life of the church were problems that were never really faced. With the rise of literary criticism the oral hypothesis was dropped, and for a while to talk

---

*This chapter is largely a summary of my argument in *The Gospel before the Gospels*, New York, Scribners; London, Allen & Unwin, 1928. In the *Theologische Rundschau* for 1929 (pages 185–216, "Zur Formgeschichte der Evangelien") Dr. Dibelius has published an admirable survey of methodology.

about oral tradition was not considered Synoptic good form. But oral tradition is with us once again.

The first real attack on the problem was made in a remarkable series of four volumes, all written quite independently, and published just after the close of the war. Their authors are, respectively, Martin Albertz,[1] Rudolf Bultmann,[2] Martin Dibelius[3] and Karl Ludwig Schmidt.[4] While their results are very diverse, all have in common the essential quality of endeavoring to define sharply the nature of the first Gospel tradition, and to determine something of the laws that governed its formation and transmission. The result has been to enrich New Testament science with a new discipline, that bears the name "form criticism." A detailed treatment of the subject would carry us beyond present limits, but we may sketch constructively a brief history of the earliest Gospel tradition in the light of the knowledge now at our disposal.

The basic fact is the twofold doctrine of Christ's Messiahship as held by the earliest church. On the one hand, he is the second and greater David,[5] "whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things,"[6] but who at the appointed season will come to redeem Israel. On the other hand, Christ is the second and greater Moses. "To him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you; and it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people."[7] That the Messiah should combine the functions of the supreme prophet and the final deliverer was a commonplace of Jewish expectation, and the distinctive tenet of the Christians in this regard—a sharp temporal distinction between the prophetic and the judicial activities—was due simply to historic experience. The prophetic ministry had already been exercised; the judicial acts were still to come.

---

[1] *Die synoptischen Streitgespräche*, Berlin, Trowitsch, 1921.

[2] *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, Göttingen, Vandenhoek, 1921.

[3] *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1919.

[4] *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu*, Berlin, Trowitsch, 1919.

[5] Acts 2:30, 13:23, etc.

[6] Acts 3:21.

The Christians thus felt qualified to give an authoritative answer to the question regarded by every Jew as a matter of life and death: What will the Messiah demand when he comes? For the Christians' Messiah had already set forth his requirements at length. Of course the decisive step was to accept the fact of Jesus' Messiahship—to "believe in him"—but to accept this was to accept as utterly binding all the teaching he had given on earth. In other words, it was the first gospel *about* Jesus that made the gospel *of* Jesus canonical.[8]

---

[7] Acts 3:22–23; cf. 7:37.

[8] Neglect to observe this has introduced confusion into many modern works. An extreme interest is Dr. S. J. Case's *Jesus: A New Biography*, University of Chicago Press, 1927, where the two "gospels" are made so mutually exclusive that Dr. Case argues that they were propagated by two entirely distinct sets of Christian communities (page 394 ff.).

The Christians described themselves as "the Way,"[9] an abbreviation, perhaps, of "the Way of God,"[10] but which on Jewish lips would mean primarily "the (correct) way of observance (of the Law)."[11] In its positive aspect this "Way" was naturally the following of the teaching of "the prophet like unto Moses"; in its negative aspect it was the peculiarly Christian observance in contradistinction to the methods current in Judaism, more specifically in contradistinction to the methods of Pharisaic scribism. Now, however inadequate may have been the moral preparation of many of the early converts, even the worst of the believing "sinners" were Jews, men to whom certain practices had always seemed essential to religion; they might neglect these rules, but they never forgot them. But in the new Way these rules had to be unlearned and new rules put in their place. From the very start, therefore, the church was confronted with a pedagogic problem of the very first magnitude.

There was no precedent in Israel for anything of the sort. The training of would-be Pharisees, for instance, offered no parallel, for such men were comparatively few,[12] were especially qualified, and were expected to spend a long period in acquiring requisite knowledge; the training of a would-be scribe was even more rigorous. The Christians, on the other hand, had to deal with multitudes of converts, often of the lowest intellectual class, who could spare but little time from the labor needed to sustain life. Yet the first Christian ideal was to equip every convert so completely that no one could specially deserve the title of "teacher,"[13] that each member of the Way should be "a scribe instructed in the Kingdom of Heaven, bringing forth out of his treasures things new and old."[14] And the problem was further complicated by the fact that at this period all religious instruction among the Jews was given orally. The teaching, therefore, must have been reduced to its barest essentials, classified in brief sections easy to memorize and apply; the most notable result of the recent form criticism study is the proof that the teaching was actually thus given.

---

[9] Acts 9:2, etc.

[10] Acts 18:26.

[11] Compare the Jewish parallels in Strack-Billerbeck on Acts 9:2.

[12] There were only about six thousand Pharisees in all (*Antt.* XVII, ii, 4).

Every investigator in the form-critical field thus far has coined his own nomenclature, but for our purposes we can be content with a general division of the material into sayings-groups, parables, dialogues,[15] miracles and passion narrative; the very few sections of the tradition that does not fall under one of these heads[16] can be disregarded here.

---

[13] Matt. 23:8, 10.

[14] Matt. 13:52.

[15] Dr. Dibelius (*Theologische Rundschau,* 1929, p. 195) objects to this classification that in the "dialogues" only one speaker (Jesus) is important. There is justice in this, but a good alternative for "dialogue" is lacking. His own term "paradigm" assumes too much.

[16] Such as Luke 8:2–3.

In our present Gospels the sayings-groups can best be studied in Luke, for in Matthew the tendency to unite these groups into long "discourses" is well advanced. Three such groups [17] have already been analyzed, and their perfect adaptability for pedagogic ends is self-evident: any of these little paragraphs could be learned—never again to be forgotten—in an hour's time by the most elementary class, and would furnish a precious guide to conduct. Union of these minimal groups into clusters of two, three or more according to topic, would begin immediately and in this way still larger collections would grow; any reconstruction of Q shows how the Sayings document was put together by assembling many groups dealing with different aspects of the Way. Introductory formulas were very simple: "Jesus said to the disciples," "to the crowds" or "to the Pharisees" were generally sufficient.[18] Concluding formulas were generally needless.

The parables need not detain us. Their original purpose as concrete illustrations of spiritual truths is familiar, and the ease with which they can be memorized is universally known. From the very first, however, there was probably some tendency to treat the parables allegorically and to search for recondite meanings;[19] a tendency that rapidly grew to impossible dimensions; we already find Mark treating the parables as puzzles and setting forth the appalling theory that Jesus used them to conceal the truth, in order to keep the Jews from being converted.[20] Parables, like sayings-groups, were assembled according to theme, as in the three parables of growth in Mark 4 or the seven parables of the Kingdom in Matt. 13. There are few traces of early editorial formulas beyond "he spoke a parable" or "parables"; probably the more elaborate phrases in our Gospels are due to the Evangelists.[21]

---

[17] Luke 6:27–31, 32–35, 36–38a; compare above, page 13.

[18] *E. g.*, Luke 6:20, 11:29, 11:45, etc.

[19] In our Synoptists three parables are provided with "explanations": the sower (Mark 4:14–20), the tares (Matt. 13:37–42) and the dragnet (Matt. 13:49–50). But neither of the first two interpretations really

The purpose of the dialogues was to transmit sayings of Jesus that could not be well understood without some knowledge of the setting. Generally a question by an interlocutor is enough after a brief description of a concrete event.[22] The interlocutors may be described as "disciples," "scribes," etc., or they may be left vague.[23] In the most compact dialogues Jesus' answer closes the scene,[24] but a slight further elaboration is more common.[25] In our Gospels the dialogues often close with a sentence describing the deep impression made by Jesus;[26] these endings may or may not be from the Evangelists'

---

fits its parable, while the third probably puts the accent in the wrong place.

[20] Mark 4:11–12.

[21] *E. g.*, Luke 14:7, 12a, etc.

[22] Mark 2:15, 23, 3:1, etc.

[23] *E. g.*, Mark 2:18.

[24] *E. g.*, Mark 2:17.

[25] For further details compare *The Gospel before the Gospels*, page 64 ff.

[26] *E. g.*, Mark 3:6, 12:17b.

hands. The suitability of the dialogues for teaching purposes is obvious. And dialogues, like sayings-groups and parables, were inevitably assembled around a common theme.

This last point is worthy of a little expansion. In Mark 2:1–3:6 there is a group of five dialogues all dealing with opposition to Jesus. Now it is a critical commonplace that the first of these dialogues (Mark 2:1–12) stands apart from the others; its form is distinct, and it treats of Jesus' personal authority, not of his attitude toward legalistic observance. Not so frequently recognized, however, is that the conclusion of the series in Mark 3:6, "And the Pharisees . . . with the Herodians took counsel against him, how they might destroy him," reappears in 12:13, "And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, that they might catch him in talk." In 12:13–34, moreover, reappear once more disputes about legal observance and in exactly the same form as in 2:13–3:6. In other words, Mark used a chain of seven dialogues, which he broke in two because the dispute about tribute and the appearance of the Sadducees were not possible in Galilee and had to be reserved for the Jerusalem visit. And this chain sets forth in unmistakable fashion distinctions between the Way and other Jewish ways, specifying followers of the Baptist, Herodians and Sadducees, but with the chief emphasis laid on Pharisaic scribism. A convert who committed only this much to memory would already have a real understanding of the requirements of his new faith.

Various combinations of sayings-groups, parables and dialogues abound in the tradition. To the dialogue in Mark 2:18–20 are appended the little parables in vv. 21–22; to the dialogue in Mark 2:23–26 the saying in vv. 27–28. In Luke 12:13–30 a dialogue introduces the subject of covetousness, which is elaborated in the parable of the rich fool and further developed in the sayings-group beginning, "Be not anxious for your life." In Mark 9:30–50 and 10:32–45 we find two sections in striking parallelism: after a sayings-group predicting the passion, both continue with a dialogue about rank and conclude with a sayings-group teaching humility. These sections, which are completely detachable from their context, form admirable lessons on the Christian duty of humble service, as taught by Christ's readiness for self-sacrifice, and as contrasted with worldly selfishness.

Indeed, the outstanding characteristic of the Synoptic teaching is the ease with which it can be resolved into short homogeneous paragraphs, each complete in itself and capable of being readily committed to memory. It is this fact that facilitated the preparation of Church lectionaries. Learning the Book of Common Prayer's Gospel for a Sunday was once a task commonly set for children; it was never difficult because—as we now realize—the Synoptic material was first drawn up for this very purpose.

The contents of the material show that its earliest preparation was for the use of Jewish disciples in Palestine; its interest in technicalities of Sabbath observance and its attacks on such scribal minutiæ as eating with washen hands prove this unambiguously. Nor does its preservation in Greek instead of Aramaic indicate that the translation was made after the Gentile mission began. Palestine—especially southern Palestine and still more especially Jerusalem—was flooded with perfectly "orthodox" Jews who spoke only Greek. And when we find Acts 6:1 attesting the presence of Hellenists in the Jerusalem community, it attests only what we should be obliged to assume without its evidence. That the Christian propaganda ignored this vital element in Palestinian Judaism is not to be supposed for a moment; in other words, Greek-speaking Christianity is practically as old as Christianity itself.

It follows that the translation of the first teaching material into Greek must have followed shortly the very beginning of the Christian mission. And we may be equally certain that, in the close mingling of Aramaic and Greek-speaking Christians in Jerusalem, the Greek rendition was as literal as possible, and was without literary pretence. It is in this way that we are to explain in so important a Christian tradition as the Lord's Prayer the presence of the famous untranslatable ἐπιούσιος. How does it happen that this basic liturgic formula contains a word completely unknown to literary Greek and with only the scantiest parallels in the papyri? The simplest answer is that the Greek form of the Lord's Prayer is the rendition of Jerusalem Hellenists, who turned it into their local Koiné—a type of Greek that has completely perished.[27]

If, then, we could recover precisely the type of Aramaic spoken by the first Christian leaders, and could retranslate into it the sayings-groups, parables and dialogues utilized by our Synoptists, we should reach with fair accuracy the Gospel tradition as it was taught in Palestine around (say) the year 40. Nor is the fact that we cannot make such a retranslation of much consequence. The material is so simple that the language is of little importance; for all really essential purposes, in fact, we are well enough off with our familiar English versions. But there remains one further and most vital question: What is the relation of this tradition to the actual teaching of Jesus?

Let us recall once more that we are dealing with a community who hoped to win salvation by following the words of a "prophet like unto Moses." They expected at any moment to see this prophet appear from heaven, to judge all men on the basis of these very words. So to this first community accurate knowledge of Jesus' sayings might very well mean nothing less than the difference between heaven and hell. Hence we have every right to expect that the tradition of this teaching would be jealously guarded. Slight accretions and variations were, no doubt, bound to creep in, but in the first generation, with eye witnesses present all through Palestine, real departure from the tradition would have been quickly detected. Even St. Paul, whose faith in his own inspiration was unwavering, was careful to make a sharp distinction between, "I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord," and, "To the rest say I, not the Lord," when the presence and absence of an historic saying of Jesus was in question.[28]

---

[27] On the meaning of ἐπιούσιος see especially Dr. A. Deissmann "Noch einmal ἐπιούσιος" in *Reinhold-Seeberg-Festschirft* (Leipsic, 1929, i, p. 299 ff.). On the evidence of a Fayum papyrus he would translate the word by "allotted quantity of." This may or may not be right.

These *à priori* considerations are fully corroborated by the contents of the tradition: it contains an almost negligible proportion of material exhibiting interests that began later than the crucifixion. Very little is said about the Spirit and still less about the gifts of the Spirit; there is hardly anything about prophecy and not one word about "tongues." Old Testament apologetic is very scanty.[29] The Christology is embryonic, and goes beyond accepted Messianism only in the L verse in Luke 21:15. Jesus does not claim to be David's son. He is not made omniscient, and there is no reference to his preexistence.[30] Of the sacraments we hear from the sayings-groups, parables and dialogues nothing at all. References to the Gentile mission are exceedingly indirect and there is no trace of the Pauline controversy.[31]

---

[28] I Cor. 7:10, 12. Jesus had ruled on the subject of divorce; he had said nothing about mixed marriages. Compare I Cor. 7:25.

[29] This applies, of course, only to the tradition itself, not to the Evangelists' own notes.

[30] Luke 4:43 is due to the Evangelist.

Finally, the material is homogeneous and inimitable: it expresses not the varied experiences of a group but the religious outlook of a single and supreme genius. Consequently in this part of the tradition we have reached a solid foundation; we are brought face to face with the historic teaching of Jesus.

This, of course, does not mean that in the sayings-groups we have literal reports of actual discourses. The time is past, we trust, for the old-fashioned, futile debates as to when the Sermon on the Mount was delivered, and for the even more futile discussions about the precise location of the "mount." As an actual discourse the Sermon on the Mount was never delivered at all, and the "mount" is mere rhetorical or theological decoration; even in the Sayings it may have been—as in Matthew it certainly is—a Christian counterpart to Sinai. Our sayings-groups are vastly more important than portions of any single discourse, no matter how solemn: they are vital cross-sections—"greatest common divisors," so to speak—of teaching given over a period of many months.

Furthermore, Jesus was popularly known and addressed as "Rabbi,"[32] so that his method of teaching had recognizable elements in common with that of other rabbis. Like them, in particular, he gathered around himself a small group of very intimate disciples, who were being trained to become teachers in their turn; such training among the Jews always included the verbatim memorization of the teacher's most important sayings. Unlike other rabbis, however, Jesus imparted his instruction in a comparatively brief period of time,[33] and, unlike other rabbis, he trained his disciples not for learned expositions of the law but for a popular preaching that was to echo his own as closely as possible; the various "mission charges" in our Gospels take this content of the disciples' message so completely for granted that only its manner of delivery is described. In other words, we have every reason to believe that the first tradition of the sayings-groups and the parables arose in Jesus' lifetime and under his personal direction; the earliest content of the tradition he himself required his disciples to commit to memory.

---

[31] For a detailed survey of the evidence compare *The Gospel before the Gospels,* chapter IV.

The problem of the dialogues is somewhat different, since in them more is involved than reproducing a phrase uttered by Jesus. And yet, in most of our dialogues, the distinction is really not very great. Generally the dialogues begin with questions that must have been put over and over again: "Why consort with sinners?" "Why eat with unwashen hands?" "Is it right for a man to put away his wife?" "When does the Kingdom of God appear?" "What is the proof of the resurrection?" "What sign do you give us?" Nor would such questions come from any particular class in the community; the Pharisees might ask them with hostile intent—undoubtedly they did—but faithful disciples might well ask exactly the same questions in all reverence. Nor was Jesus' reply to any given question always couched in the same terms. We find, for instance, to the reproach about companying with sinners sayings about those in need of a physician,[34] about a woman who loved much,[35] about seeking that which is lost,[36] about those who believed the Baptist,[37] and at least five parables, the lost sheep, the lost coin, the prodigal son, the two debtors and the two sons,[38] beside various other fragments. From all this material dialogues could be and were formed in various ways; we should think, consequently, of the usual dialogue not as the report of any single occurrence, but as a representative question and answer often given. The exceptions to this rule are few and obvious, such as the chief priests' demand for the authority exercised in cleansing the temple.

---

[32] On the title compare SB, i, p. 916 f.

[33] Compare, *e. g.*, SB, i, p. 496 ff.

The fourth class into which we can divide the tradition is the miracles; by this we mean miracles described in some detail and for their own sake, not miracles that form an incidental element in a dialogue.[39] Historical discussion of the miracles has, of course, perpetually been complicated with philosophical and dogmatic considerations on the possibility of miracles in general and of Jesus' miracles in especial. With these problems we scarcely need concern ourselves here. That Jesus had extraordinary power to relieve sickness—mental and otherwise—was not questioned by even his worst enemies.[40] His disciples, moreover—and perhaps his enemies as well—believed that his power was in no way limited to healing; he could control natural forces and could even raise the dead. The stories of his achievements were used in the earliest Christian mission preaching [41] to prove to unbelievers his supernatural calling, while in the church these stories nourished faith. And no doubt the accounts of his procedure served also as models for such Christians as themselves had the gift of healing.[42] The miracles accordingly formed part of the very earliest Christian tradition, while we may be quite certain that some of the stories were widely circulated in Jesus' lifetime. Like the other elements of the Christian teaching they were grouped together, as in Mark 4:35–5:43, which is composed entirely of miracles. They were likewise combined with dialogues, etc., to make larger composite paragraphs: the extraordinary parallelism between Mark 6:32–7:37 and 8:1–26 is scarcely explicable except on the assumption that Mark has associated cycles that originally described in large measure the same events.

---

[34] Mark 2:17.

[35] Luke 7:47.

[36] Luke 19:10.

[37] Matt. 21:32, Luke 7:29.

[38] Luke 15, 7:41–42, Matt. 21:28–31.

---

[39] *E. g.*, Mark 3:1–6.

[40] Mark 3:22, Luke 11:15 = Matt. 12:24.

[41] Acts 2:22, 10:38.

[42] I Cor. 12:28, etc.

The form of the miracle stories has received intensive study in the last few years, especially in comparison with non-Christian tales. We cannot now enter into the details; it must suffice here to say that the conventional "form" aims to display the fully attested and wholly miraculous power of the wonder-worker. In the Fourth Gospel all the miracles are strictly of this type, but the Synoptic stories are usually crossed by an entirely different motive, the necessity of faith on the part of the recipient of the miracle.

It is when we attempt to trace the relation of the stories to the events described that the student's historical sense is most chiefly apt to suffer perturbation. A very common "conservative" argument takes the form, "Any true believer in the Incarnation must hold that Jesus had power to work any miracle; it is therefore irreverent to question the accounts." The problem, however, is not quite so simple as this. For to believe that Jesus had power to do a thing in no way proves that he actually did do that thing on a given occasion: this is wholly a question of evidence. No one doubts that Jesus had power to pursue the complicated and almost circular journey described in Mark 7:31–8:27, but that he really did follow so apparently meaningless a route is questioned by almost every student of the Second Gospel—nor are such questionings usually deemed rash or irreverent. Granting all faith in the possibility of Jesus' miracles, when we study the Gospel accounts historically, what do we discover?

We discover in the first place, by merely literary comparison of parallel accounts, that miraculous elements are regularly heightened by the later Evangelists; this is perfectly familiar to everyone. We are bound, therefore, to ask whether a similar heightening may not have influenced the pre-literary stage of the tradition. The first Christian leaders were obliged to exercise control over the tradition of Jesus' sayings, but would a corresponding control over the stories of his mighty works have been thought equally vital? It does not seem probable.

However, let us put the most favorable construction on the evidence. It may very well be the case that most of Mark's miracle stories are told much as Mark had heard Peter relate them many times; the simplicity of these stories, their comparative freedom from conventional elements, and the constant presence of an emphasis on faith all tell in their favor. Very good; but even then do we know from what specific disease Peter's mother-in-law was suffering? Whether the "leper" really was tainted with true leprosy? Whether Jairus' daughter was actually dead? Whether in the tempest the words "Be still" were addressed to the waves or to the clamorous disciples? Whether the cessation of the storm came as a result of Jesus' will or from natural exhaustion of the wind? We do not know any of these things—nor did the eyewitnesses know them either. And so, taking "miracle" in its traditional sense, we have no unambiguous evidence in any of these cases for a truly miraculous occurrence. And we cannot build faith on ignorance.

Our verdict, then, on the miracle stories as a whole must be a *non liquet*. We neither know that special miraculous forces were at work, nor do we know that they were not at work. There are, of course, exceptions. We do not—I trust—believe that Jesus expected to find figs on a tree in March, nor that he cursed the poor plant because it could not achieve the impossible. We have our doubts about the fish that, despite a stater in its mouth, could still take a hook. The historian can scarcely be expected to treat very literally the story of a star that left the sky and came down to stand over a house. In all of such cases we should be false to our duty if we did not look beneath the surface of the narratives to the underlying motive. And the same principle must be carried over into the analysis of the other miracle stories as well—to an extent to be determined by the circumstances of each individual case.

The last class of Synoptic tradition is the passion narrative, and here again for the origins we must go back into the earliest days. Such a narrative was not, to be sure, rigidly vital—the Sayings contained no account of the passion—but Christian interest in the details of Jesus' death must have been vivid from the very first. So St. Paul tells the Corinthians that "among the first things" that he had "delivered" to them was that Jesus "died and was buried." And St. Paul, naturally, could not have confined himself to a bare statement of the facts of death and burial; most inquirers into the new faith must have demanded fuller knowledge as a prerequisite to conversion, while every convert would be passionately anxious to know about his Lord's last hours. In fact, it is not too much to deduce from St. Paul's language that the general form of the passion narrative was already fixed; he tells us that what he "delivered" he had also "received," and, speaking of the other apostles, he concludes, "Whether it be I or they, so we preach." We may note likewise that the Fourth Evangelist, while feeling perfectly free to remodel most of the Gospel story to suit his own purpose, is careful in his passion chapters to keep to the general Synoptic outline.

Like the rest of the tradition the passion narrative is made up of short paragraphs, each an independent unit; we may list them as they stand in Mark 14–15: (1) Judas' treachery, in two sections, between which stands (2) The anointing at Bethany. (3) The preparation of the meal. (4) Prediction of the betrayal. (5) Institution of the eucharist. (6) Prediction of the desertion. (7) Gethsemane. (8) The arrest.[43] (9) Peter's denial, in two sections, between which stands (10) The sanhedrin's investigation. (11) The denunciation to Pilate. (12) The scourging.[44] (13) The crucifixion. (14) Jesus' death. (15) The burial.

---

[43] Mark 14:51–52 is obviously not part of the general tradition.

All is straightforward here, with the exception of the interweaving of (2) in (1) and of (10) in (9). The story of the anointing, touching though it is, does not seem to be important enough to make it a part of the commonly told passion narrative, and it is presumably from some other source;[45] its removal reestablishes the close connection between verses 2 and 10 of Mark 14. Nor can we readily believe that wherever the passion of Jesus was described the missionaries regularly included an account of Peter's denial; if we remove this, (10) follows (8) in logical order.[46] But with Peter's denial must go also its prediction in (6), which is a prediction of general apostolic faithlessness as well;[47] this in turn reestablishes the connection between verses 26 and 32 of Mark 14. With perhaps less plausibility we may likewise wonder if the secret preparation of the meal in (3) was of sufficient interest to warrant its inclusion in a generally used story.

The remaining twelve sections give, we should imagine, just about the events that any detailed passion narrative would be bound to contain. Mark, no doubt, has used his own wording to some degree, but in chapters 14–15 his characteristic verbosity is not as evident as usual. We observe also that the Evangelist's incidental notes throughout are not incorporated into the story, but are mechanically superadded to it,[48] so that, after eliminating these, we may feel we are in approximate touch with a pre-Markan account of the passion.

---

[44] Passing over Mark 15:21.

[45] Bernard Weiss, indeed, included it in the Sayings.

[46] We may compare the way Mark has interwoven the Beelzebub passage 3:22–30—from the Sayings—with the story of Jesus' relatives, or the accounts of the Baptist's death in 6:14–29—from some source outside Synoptic tradition—with the mission of the Twelve.

[47] The contents of (6) and (9), indeed, accord with Mark's regular tendency to depreciate the Twelve.

As regards the sources of this narrative, everything up to and including (8) could be related by any one of the Twelve (at least), while the remainder would lie within the common knowledge of most Jerusalemites.[49] And L's passion narrative confirms Mark's, for although L was composed quite independently of Mark, contains matter not in Mark,[50] and varies from Mark in certain details,[51] yet the agreement on the whole is as close as we have any reasonable right to expect. We of course by this do not mean to affirm the accuracy of everything in Mark or L, but there is nothing that calls in question the general course of the events that they describe.

We have now completed our study of the elements that make up the Synoptic tradition, and may undertake to reconstruct its development as a whole. It began with the actual teaching of Jesus. The memory of his synagogue and other discourses —discourses that must have been of some length— is preserved only in such phrases as, "He taught in the synagogues, and they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as having authority," [52] and what the disciples preserved were the short sayings that served as the "texts" and summaries of his message. These were crisp, epigrammatic phrases that cling irresistibly and perpetually in the memory; phrases that Jesus could require his disciples to learn almost without effort. Each such saying was complete in itself, but sayings on a common theme were associated—often, no doubt, by Jesus himself—into groups of from half-a-dozen to twenty or more. Along with these sayings-groups the disciples learned the illustrative stories —"parables" we call them—that helped fix the lesson. And they learned also the answers to be given to common questions; these questions and answers together forming embryonic dialogues.

---

[48] Compare 14:51–52, 15:21, 25, 33, 38, 40–41. The doubling of "cried with a loud voice" in 15:34 and 15:37 also creates a problem.

[49] Compare pages 166 f.

[50] Notably the scene before Antipas and the words to the lamenting women; neither of these would have figured in the "common" tradition.

[51] *E. g.*, L refers the Jewish mockery of Jesus to the bailiffs of the sanhedrin, not to the sanhedrists themselves.

In Jesus' lifetime, likewise, the disciples were already telling stories of the marvellous works they were convinced they had seen Jesus perform. These, however, they told on their own responsibility, with no cooperation on their Master's part or even after his express prohibition;[53] they and not he created the form of their narratives.

---

[52] Mark 1:21–22.

[53] Mark 1:44; etc.; the only exception is Mark 5:19.

Such was the material in the hands of the first church when it took up the task of preparing men to meet the approaching judgment; a judgment to be held on the basis of the teaching which the Judge had already given as "the prophet like unto Moses." The requisite material was ready and in perfect pedagogic form; all that was needed was a supplement describing how the coming Messiah had suffered, died and risen again. The sole immediate additional necessity was to translate this material into Greek, to meet the need of Jews to whom Aramaic was unfamiliar.

Eyewitnesses capable of giving the necessary instruction were scattered all over Palestine, but the centre of the community was at Jerusalem, where the most approved teachers had their abode. At Jerusalem, likewise, occurred most of the conversions of visiting pilgrims, men who necessarily desired to take home with them as much of the tradition as might be possible. Hence we are bound to postulate at Jerusalem the growth of something like a "teacher training institute," where the fullest approved catechetical instruction could be given in the briefest possible time. This would rapidly produce a "standardized" form of the tradition, and it is this, I believe, that issued eventually in the Sayings collection. This semi-official Jerusalem production would have great authority throughout the rest of Palestine, and yet would not entirely displace other local collections and traditions, such as we find in L. And even in Jerusalem this collection would be supplemented with other teaching on less central matters and with all sorts of more informal reminiscences—the latter limited only by the curiosity of inquirers.

Somewhere along this course of development the first written versions were made. Whatever objection at this period precedent may have raised to formal Aramaic documents embodying Rabbinic expositions of the Law, there was certainly nothing to prevent students jotting down sayings as an aid to memory. Nor do we know how far Jewish Christians would feel bound by Rabbinic objections; "Matthew" certainly disregarded them when he wrote "the Logia in the Hebrew tongue." At all events, the necessities of the propaganda among Greek-speaking Jews might well suffice to override all scruples, for pilgrims to Jerusalem were often very limited as to time, and some special provision for their needs may have been demanded at a very early date.

With the beginnings of the Gentile mission, however, all hesitancy must have vanished. The wildfire spread of the new faith would overtax impossibly the powers of oral catechists and—what is more important—the new converts were untrained in elaborate memorizing: Greeks were accustomed to documents and books. So, even if the church's experience with Hellenistic Jews had not provided written sources, their creation would be imperative now. Nor was this creation difficult: all any catechist needed to do was to write out what he was in the habit of delivering orally. When Luke tells us that many had "taken in hand" to draw up "narratives," there is no reason to suppose that such narratives were novelties in his day.

As to the nature and extent of these very first documents we naturally cannot say very much. A fuller analysis of Mark for underlying sources may clarify the problem somewhat: compare, for instance, the dialogue chain 2:13–3:6, 12:13–34, the miracle cycle 4:35–5:43, the parallel groups 6:30–7:37 and 8:1–26, and the passion narrative. Everyone knows Mark's habit of adding glosses to his material,[54] and the time has come to study more closely the source or sources that he has glossed.

At any rate, material of this description must have been in the hands of the early Gentile communities, and this fact may well give us a key to the nature of the "teachers," whom St. Paul regards as essential for the church's well-being.[55] Just what and how did these "teachers" teach? Not by direct inspiration or revelation, for this was the function of the "prophet." Not, assuredly, on the basis of mere "worldly" wisdom nor even as skillful interpreters of the Old Testament: St. Paul would not have given men of this type any particular standing in his communities. The teacher, consequently, could have been only the expounder of Christian revelation already given, the man to whom Christians could turn for practical direction, the Christian analogue of the Jewish scribes and (more specifically) elders.[56] In fact, Eph. 4:11 identifies the "teacher" pointblank with the "pastor," and it is precisely the combination of teaching and pastoral functions that make up the "elders" of the Pastoral Epistles and later Christian usage. In St. Paul's day the material on which the teachers drew could not yet have been very abundant, and as its chief element we must presuppose "the commandments of the Lord." [57]

---

[54] Beginning (at least) with 1:24.

[55] I Cor. 12:28, etc.

That these earlier collections of Jesus' words were displaced by the Sayings document shows the great authority that was attached to the latter. And Mark contented himself with supplementing the Sayings with material that it lacked, namely miracles, fuller dialogues and a passion narrative.

Such was the early course of the Synoptic tradition. Our analysis of its nature carries with it certain important implications for the student who wishes to reconstruct the course of Jesus' ministry. There are certain things that he simply must *not* do. The pedagogical and topical reasons that determined the arrangement of the material show that the sense of movement in our Gospels is usually only a literary device. The most famous instance is the journey in Luke, beginning at 9:51 and ending at 17:11, which after nearly eight chapters of continuous travel steadily in the direction of Jerusalem[58] finds Jesus and his disciples exactly where they started. Such phrases as, "he departed from thence," "he entered into another city," etc., are almost invariably only formulas used by the Evangelists to smooth the transition from one paragraph to another. When they stand at the beginning of a section they seem generally to have been deduced from its contents: "this was a synagogue scene," "this took place in the open country." And so maps of Jesus' "journeys," constructed by following mechanically the topography described in the Gospels,[59] represent quite literally nothing whatsoever.

---

[56] Hence Matthew's whole-hearted objection to the teacher and all his works (Matt. 23:8–10).

[57] I Cor. 7:25.

Nor are we much better off in chronology, except in the broadest outlines. From the fact, for instance, that we find springtime scenery in Mark 2:23 and then not again until 6:39, we have no possible right to deduce the lapse of a year. And what is true of Mark is even more true of the later Evangelists, where almost anything rather than chronology has been responsible for the general order of their sections.[60] Ignoring this has produced, for instance, the myth of a "Peræan ministry" for Luke 10–16.

Perhaps most important of all, we must be on our guard against an over-psychological treatment of our sections. When a scene is typical rather than concrete, so that the enlivening touches are the work of the Evangelist, it is obviously futile to attempt to recreate the inner thoughts of the participants as the narrative proceeds. We can say, of course, that when Pharisees raised a certain objection their motives were probably so-and-so. But when we go beyond this point we are writing not exegesis but homiletic exposition.

---

[58] Compare Luke 13:22.

[59] *E. g.*, as in Swete's *St. Mark*, p. lxxxiv.

[60] No matter what Luke may have meant by "in order" in 1:3.

III. THE NON-SYNOPTIC TRADITION

Nothing distinguishes modern English books on the life of Christ from those of a generation ago more than the very cautious use that is now made of the Fourth Gospel. The tone began to change about the beginning of the present century. Up until then attacks on using the Johannine narrative in the same terms as the Synoptists had come chiefly from the determinedly "negative" school,[1] with more than a suspicion of theological animus. And yet a sense of uneasiness was disturbing all but the most orthodox circles, an uneasiness that displayed itself unmistakably in silence: after the publication of Westcott's classic book in 1880 no large commentary on John appeared in English until 1929![2]

There were of course smaller commentaries,[3] and an endless series of monographs. Sanday's *The Criticism of The Fourth Gospel*,[4] avidly read and quoted in its own day, was little more than a series of cautious warnings against adopting "radical" conclusions too wholeheartedly, and it exercised only the delaying effect of a rear-guard action. On the other side, however, there appeared the very important volume of Dr. E. F. Scott, *The Fourth Gospel: Its Purpose and Theology*,[5] which introduced English readers to the German outlook.[6] This was followed by Dr. B. W. Bacon's *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate*,[7] a collection of brilliant essays from an independent standpoint, while Dr. Moffatt's enormously informing discussion in his classical *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* [8] was especially influential among English-speaking circles. A list of other special monographs would serve no purpose here, but many of them were of high rank. Toward the close of the War came the first really modern English commentary on St. John, Dr. R. H. Strachan's *The Fourth Gospel*,[9] a small volume but written with a thorough understanding of the problems; it is significant to note that it was published by so positively religious an organization as the Student Christian Movement. Dr. B. W. Robinson's *The Gospel of John* [10] provided an American counterpart along much the same lines, with perhaps an even greater emphasis on the devotional value of the more modern point of view. In recent years the very brilliant and thorough introduction by the lamented J. Estlin Carpenter, *The Johannine Writings*,[11] and the altogether admirable commentary by Dr. G. H. C. Macgregor, *The Gospel of John*,[12] provide English-speaking students with an excellent apparatus. Our only lack is an adequate study of the Greek text. Our hope that this would be supplied by the late Archbishop Bernard's contribution to the *International Critical Commentary* [13] has been only partly fulfilled; despite the great bulk of the commentary it has proved disappointingly inadequate.

---

[1] The bibliography "against Johannine authorship" in Moffatt's *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, chapter V, contains astonishingly few works in English. During most of the nineteenth century "the Germans" were apt to be more than suspect in most English-speaking theological circles.

[2] The "Greek" Westcott, published in 1908, was no great improvement on the familiar work on the English text.

[3] The best of the pre-war works was probably Marcus Dods' contribution to the *Expositor's Greek Testament* (1897).

[4] Oxford Press, 1905.

---

[5] Edinburgh, Clark; New York, Scribners, 1911; 3d ed. 1918.

[6] Dr. Scott adopted in general the conclusions of H. J. Holtzmann.

[7] 1910; reissued by the Yale University Press in 1918.

[8] Edinburgh, Clark; New York, Scribners, 1911; 3d ed. 1918.

[9] London, 1917.

[10] New York, Macmillan, 1925.

Throughout the whole development of English Johannine study, however, one feature of the Fourth Gospel—and that the most important—has been constantly acknowledged; the discourses ascribed to Jesus contain an interpretative element due to the Evangelist. So we find in even Westcott: "An inspired record of words, like an inspired record of the outward circumstances of a life, must be an interpretation. The power of the prophet to enter into the divine thoughts is the measure of the veracity of his account."[14] Archbishop Bernard, writing nearly fifty years later, however, shows the change that had taken place in even highly conservative thinking, when he says, for instance: "It is not to be overlooked, moreover, that in these reports[15] the commentary of the evangelist cannot always be distinguished from the sayings of Jesus which he has set down."[16] And this existence of an unmistakable interpretative element in the discourses is now no longer debatable; the sole problem is its extent.

---

[11] Boston, Houghton Mifflin; London, Constable, 1927.

[12] New York, Doubleday, Doran; London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1929.

[13] *The Gospel according to St. John*, Edinburgh, Clark; New York, Scribners, 1929.

[14] Page lviii. Of this principle, however, Westcott made no use in the body of his commentary, but treated the discourses throughout as verbally inerrant.

Attempts have been made to define it by literary criticism but with no marked success; literary source-analysis of the Fourth Gospel has led thus far only to individualistic conclusions. Most of the work in this field has been in German, but in English a few attempts have been made, most notably that of Dr. A. E. Garvie in his *The Beloved Disciple*,[17] while Dr. Strachan, Dr. Macgregor and Archbishop Bernard in their commentaries all make more or less systematic attempts to distinguish between various hands, such as "the witness," "the Evangelist," "the redactor," etc. The results reached, however, are not encouraging, although this line of investigation certainly must not be abandoned.

As a matter of fact, we may find in a Johannine passage that the argument is developed from a saying that occurs in the Synoptic tradition as well. But we are also apt to find that in the Johannine section this saying is the only element with Synoptic echoes. For instance, in John 15:20 we read the familiar "A servant is not greater than his lord,"[18] which, indeed, is formally introduced as well known by the formula "Remember that I said unto you." But to the end of the chapter the development proceeds in such technically Johannine phraseology as to make attempts to identify other verses as "original" most precarious: the passage gives the almost irresistible impression of a little Johannine homily on a Synoptic "text." Identification of genuine sayings of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, consequently, is hazardous. We can be reasonably certain of our ground only when we can find Synoptic parallels—and for historical purposes we can better restrict ourselves to those parallels.

---

[15] The polemical discourse of the second part of the Gospel.

[16] Page cxiv. It may be noted that, unlike Westcott, Bernard is less conservative in the body of the commentary than he is in his introduction.

[17] London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1922.

Now, does this interpretative element which is so generally admitted in the discourses extend also to the narrative portions? At present the answer to this question determines to a very real degree the difference between the "conservative" and the "critical" interpretations of the Fourth Gospel: Dr. Bernard, for instance, devotes a whole section of his introduction [19] to a demonstration of the thesis that "The literary method of the Evangelist is not that of allegory." At the start of his discussion he rephrases the question in this form: "Did John *intend* to write history?" and follows with the additional question, "Did he permit himself to bring out spiritual lessons by portraying scenes which he knew were not historical?"

---

[18] Matt. 10:24.

[19] Pages lxxxiii–xc.

The difficulty with this phrasing of the problem is that it imports into the argument a series of modern distinctions and values. A better way of expressing the point at issue might be to ask, "Did the Fourth Evangelist himself draw any very clear distinction between historical truth and spiritual truth?" Or, "Did he feel that historical truth was so sacred that spiritual truth must, in the event of a clash, always yield to it?" Jewish and Christian literature from (say) B. C. 250 to A. D. 250 simply teems with pseudepigraphs of all sorts; are we to class the writers of Daniel, Enoch, and II Peter pointblank as dishonest fabricators? To ask this question is to answer it; we have no conceivable right to apply to men of their age current standards of historical ethics—still less to foreclose the progress of critical inquiry by an appeal to such standards. Moreover, we might well ask on Archbishop Bernard's own premises, "Why should a writer, who does not shrink from putting into Jesus' mouth words that he never uttered, hesitate about modifying Jesus' acts?"

The historian, then, must lay all such considerations relentlessly aside, and ask instead what the narratives themselves disclose. And in one instance we can compare a whole Johannine section with the corresponding account in Mark, in the feeding of the five thousand. Here there is not the slightest doubt that both Evangelists are describing exactly the same event. During the nineteenth century it was the custom to say "the superiority in distinctness and precision is all on the side of St. John."[20] Yet a narrative that gives an impression of distinctness and precision is not by this alone proved historic; every Synoptic student knows how the later Gospels tend to enrich Mark with striking details of very dubious value, while for full vividness of minutiæ we must look not to canonical but to apocryphal sources.

When we compare John 6:1–16 with Mark 6:31–46 we observe the following differences. Mark states that Jesus and his disciples took a boat, while the crowds followed on land, arriving before him, thus defeating his purpose to rest. John merely states that both Jesus and the crowds went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee; in the Fourth Gospel Jesus' purpose never is and never can be defeated. Mark implies that the crowd wished to hear Jesus preach; at least, Jesus teaches them because he had compassion. In John the crowds are inspired solely by their love for miracles; a constant Johannine theme. In John, moreover, there is no teaching; the feeding is prepared for before the crowds arrive and is carried out immediately. The mention of the passover gives an appearance of precision to John, but the passover allegory is dominant throughout the sixth chapter, so that the historical purpose of the dating is subordinate.

---

[20] Swete, *St. Mark,* page 132, quoting from Sanday.

In Mark the feeding comes at the close of a long day, and is instigated by the disciples' demand that Jesus dismiss the crowds. In John, Jesus, seated serenely on "the mount," [21] takes the entire initiative; this is again a constant Johannine characteristic.[22] The naming of Philip and Andrew as interlocutors, which used to be taken as proving an eyewitness, may equally well represent a late and semi-apocryphal desire for elaboration. In Mark the disciples distribute the food to the multitudes; in John the disciples are called on only to gather up the fragments. This assures that the multiplication of the loaves was truly miraculous and the result of Jesus' own hands, for no one else touched the bread.[23]

Especially interesting is the formal confirmation of the miracle. Of the effect on the crowds Mark says nothing, leaving the modern historian to puzzle out, as best he may, what actually occurred. In John nothing is left to the imagination. The crowds are fully conscious of the marvel, and are so amazed by it that they call out, "This is of a truth the prophet," and come to take Jesus by force to make him a king. As a result Mark and John end quite differently. In Mark the disciples are hurried into a boat by Jesus and dispatched to Bethsaida. In John Jesus withdraws "again into the mountain himself alone," with as little effort and with as complete success as when he "hides himself and goes out of the temple"[24] or when he goes "forth out of their hand";[25] although it is still daylight nobody is able to follow him. However, when evening has come, the disciples take boat for not Bethsaida but Capernaum; since the long discourse of chapter 6 must be held on truly Jewish soil.[26]

---

[21] Whatever that may mean.

[22] In John, when others propose action to Jesus, he always shows his independence by a rebuke or by delaying, even when the act proposed is one of which he approves (John 2:4, 7:6–10, 11:6).

[23] Liturgical considerations may also have been at work.

In the above comparison, of course, Mark is not held up as a model of historic precision, so that any deviations from his account are self-condemned; Mark's story already contains palpable allegorical elements. But the above comparison, I believe, shows that John's deviations from Mark are inspired by theological reasoning and not in the least by better historical recollection. And the naïve character of John's historical writing is still more clearly seen in the subsequent scene John 6:22–26. John tells us that the disciples had taken away the only boat available, so that the crowds were forced to wait until other boats came to carry them home. This proves that Jesus' passage from the scene of the miracle was purely miraculous, and makes the five thousand bear witness to this miracle as well; when they found him on the other side of the sea they ask in wonder, "Rabbi, when camest thou hither?" There was, therefore, no way of reaching Capernaum by land; the multitude was obliged to wait all night on the lakeside—and John does not ask himself how many boats must have come from Tiberias in order to ferry so many thousands across the lake! Surely we need not labor the point that this paragraph is a mere literary device, without historic foundation. And we may even ask with much reason how anyone with a real knowledge of Galilean topography could manage to write such a description. In any case we should certainly understand that, whatever was John's purpose, it was assuredly not to write history, as we understand history.

---

[24] John 8:59.

[25] John 10:39.

[26] Moreover, the statement in Mark that by Jesus' command the disciples set sail for Bethsaida but were carried by the storm to Gennesaret would be impossible in John, since by this misadventure a purpose of Jesus was defeated.

Consequently the student of Jesus' acts can put very little dependence on the statements of the Fourth Gospel. The Evangelist may have utilized data not found in the Synoptists, and, indeed, there are traces here and there of sources which he has not thoroughly assimilated. In 4:22, for instance, the troublesome phrase "for salvation is from the Jews" fits very badly with the general outlook of the Fourth Gospel, according to which it could be said of Jews and Samaritans alike, "Ye worship that which ye know not; we [Christians] worship that which we know." The implication is that John is using material that attacked the Samaritans from a Jewish or Jewish-Christian standpoint, instead of his own complete universalism. Or in 11:35 "Jesus wept" defies all attempts at explanation as it stands in a narrative which emphasizes in every line Jesus' impassibility; perhaps the older source told of a more human response to Lazarus' death. Little, however, can be made out of such indications; the older sources—if there were any—have been so submerged by the Evangelist's didacticism that they are now unrecoverable.

In view of this the perpetual dispute about the personality of "John" has largely lost its significance. It is still quite possible to contend for an eyewitness as its author, and perhaps even John the son of Zebedee has not been ruled entirely out of court. But if the Gospel is really by an eyewitness, he has written with but little regard for what he actually saw and heard. Personally I believe that a very young Jerusalem disciple, who had but little contact with the Master, best satisfies such evidence as really exists,[27] but I do not believe that much can be built on even this hypothesis.

For our purposes, consequently, it is needless here to enter into any further analysis of the Fourth Gospel. Nor need we delay over the very real contributions made toward understanding its outlook by a study of the Hermetic literature and the gnostic writings, particularly the Odes of Solomon. On the other hand, researches into Mandæanism deserve a mention, not only for the light they throw on Johannine concepts but for their possible value as independent witnesses to John the Baptist, Jesus and early Christian history.

---

[27] The amount of genuine testimony as to the authorship is very slight.

Mandæan study is a comparatively recent discipline and, indeed, has practically no history before 1867 when H. Petermann published what was virtually the *editio princeps* of the Ginza.[28] And it was not until 1889 that any attempt was made to evaluate Mandæanism as a source for Christian history, the first work in this field being Wilhelm Brandt's *Die mandäische Religion* which he published in 1889;[29] he followed this in 1893 with an annotated translation of about one-fourth of the Ginza,[30] making this work accessible for the first time in a European language. And Brandt's developed position is given at some length in his posthumous article "Mandæans" in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*.[31] His researches formed the basis for the various excursions into Mandæanism which appear in Bousset's well-known *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis*,[32] but until the full texts were available to others than Semitic specialists not much progress was possible; for their publication we owe deep gratitude to the late Mark Lidzbarski, who published *Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer* in 1915, *Mandäische Liturgien* in 1920 and finally a complete rendition of the Ginza itself in 1925. Since 1915 we have had Dr. Richard Reitzenstein's *Das*

---

[28] *Thesaurus, sive Liber Magnus,* Berlin and Leipsic. On M. Norberg's earlier edition (*Codex Nasaræus,* Londini Gotharum, 1817) see the bibliographies.

[29] Leipsic, Hinrichs.

[30] *Mandäische Schriften,* Göttingen.

[31] 1916. Brandt died in 1915.

[32] Göttingen, 1907.

mandäische Buch des Herrn der Grösse und die Evangelienüberlieferung[33] and (especially) his *Die Vorgeschichte der christlichen Taufe*,[34] Dr. S. V. Pallis' *Mandæan Studies*[35] and a brief series of extracts from the Book of John in Mr. G. R. S. Mead's *The Gnostic John the Baptizer*,[36] beside various special studies in periodicals and elsewhere.

The Mandæans are a religious group inhabiting Mesopotamia and numbering, according to various calculations, from two to ten thousand or more souls. Their ordinary language is Arabic or Persian, but their sacred writings are in a dialect of Babylonian Aramaic, which is peculiar to themselves and is called by their own name. "Mandæan" means simply "gnostic," but the group's title for their own members is "nazoræans" or—according to Lidzbarski—"observants." What makes them important to us is that they claim as their founder no less a person than John the Baptist.

According to their sacred books, which date perhaps from the seventh to the tenth century or later, John formed a group of disciples, to whom he revealed many heavenly secrets and to whom he entrusted certain sacramental ordinances, chiefly, of course, his rite of baptism but with other divinely ordained ceremonies as well. After his death these disciples remained faithful to his teaching, and progressed despite the violent opposition of the Jews, an opposition that made at least one Mandæan martyr.[37] But before long they were driven out of Palestine, an event which—if any credence is to be put in the story—is probably to be associated with the intense outburst of Jewish nationalism in the seventh decade of the first century.[38] So baptism in the Jordan was no longer possible, but a special revelation taught them that any river could now be considered the Jordan, since the true Jordan is a heavenly stream.

---

[33] Heidelberg, Winter, 1919.

[34] Leipsic, Teubner, 1929.

[35] Oxford University Press, 1919, 2nd edition 1926. This is a translation from an original in Danish.

[36] London, 1924.

Their records tell of the baptism of Jesus by John. The latter, however, was very reluctant to perform the ceremony because he detected that Jesus was an impostor. He therefore refused at first, but was overruled by a heavenly voice directing him to baptize the deceiver; he obeyed, after pledging Jesus to strict future obedience to his teaching, but Jesus broke the pledge and all manner of false doctrine was set loose in the world.

Now, if any real tradition is to be detected in this story, it is naturally a matter of the deepest interest to us. On its face, it is just about what we should expect to find in an anti-Christian body which claimed the Baptist as its founder. The fact of Jesus' baptism was incontrovertible, but the differences between Christians and Mandæans had made John's act a scandal to the Mandæan faithful, and some sort of an explanation had become needful. From the opposite point of view, the baptism of Jesus became a problem that seriously troubled the early Christians; Matthew makes John protest his unworthiness,[39] while the Fourth Evangelist omits the incident altogether.

---

[37] A girl called Miriam.

[38] Compare the Christian emigration to Pella.

We must, however, note that Mandæan knowledge of Christianity prior to the fourth century (at least) is extremely scanty, or perhaps entirely negative. The Christians that appear in this literature are regularly called "Romans"—*i. e.*, "Constantinopolitans"—members of a state church, and of a persecuting church at that. Certain offences, moreover, charged against the Christians are obviously not primitive, such as baptizing in a font instead of running water, ceremonial use of the cross, and practising extensive celibacy. Indeed, the Mandæan documents make Jesus the direct originator of these uses, put into John's mouth the reproach, "Thou hast cut off their seed from the men, and from the women bearing and being pregnant," and make Jesus promise to remember John in his "writing"—*i. e.*, the Gospel. Here it is perfectly evident that we are not dealing with an independent and primitive tradition; we are dealing with a polemic first formed three or more centuries after the events described. And we must note also that the Mandæan writings constantly seem to confuse Jews and Christians as holding the same religion. Consequently it is natural enough to find many scholars contending that Mandæanism has nothing at all to do with the Baptist and that all references to him and to Jesus are of early mediæval origin.[40]

---

[39] Matt. 3:14–15.

The argument runs something like this. The Mandæans are actually a development of Oriental gnostic movements, and have no primitive connection with Palestine or Judaism. Christian missionaries, however, brought them the Gospels and they became familiar with the names of Jesus and John. The former they rejected absolutely, the latter they adopted into their—for lack of a better term—pantheon, and played him off as a rival to Jesus. The Mohammedan conquest of Mesopotamia further accentuated the process; or, in the opinion of some scholars, the influence of Mohammedanism preceded the influence of Christianity in importing the names of Jesus and John into the Mandæan scheme of things.

Now, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the great bulk of Mandæanism is non-Christian and non-Jewish in its origin. For a key to the puzzles of the Ginza we must look to Persia and Babylonia, while the influence of the Old Testament is of the very scantiest. It is likewise true that the Baptist is by no means prominent in Mandæan literature taken as a whole; his real significance is confined to the Book of John. And yet when we have said all this, we have left certain very important problems unsolved.

---

[40] So, *e. g.*, Dr. F. C. Burkitt in the fourteenth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1929, article "Mandæans"), agreeing in large measure with Brandt and Dr. Pallis.

In the first place, it is anything but clear how the Mandæans came to adopt John as a result of their hatred of the Jesus presented to them by the "Romans." No uncritical reader of the Gospels ever thinks of John as anything but Jesus' forerunner and worshipper, and to suggest that fifth-century Mandæans could penetrate beneath the surface of the Gospels and detect that the historic John's attitude was more reserved is of course to suggest a manifest absurdity. Nor—I believe—do we know anything about Mohammedan sources which teach an opposition between Jesus and John; the existence of such sources seems an impossibility since the Mohammedans here had only Christian tradition to draw on. On the other hand, if the Mandæans had a vague independent tradition about John and (perhaps) an even more vague but hostile tradition about Jesus, the explanation would be easy. When they were confronted with the Christian sources—or with Mohammedan legends based on the Christian sources—they would reply in just such indignant terms as we now find.

We are, however, not left entirely to conjecture. Between the Mandæan writings and the Fourth Gospel there is a remarkable series of verbal contacts, far too close to be accidental.[41] As direct borrowing on either side is unthinkable, a common eventual source is the only explanation. As everyone knows, one purpose of the Fourth Gospel is the definite subordination of the Baptist to Jesus. "He was not that light, but came that he might bear witness of the light."[42] John even denies the identification with Elijah that we find in the Synoptists; he is *only* a voice crying in the wilderness,[43] bearing testimony that this is the Son of God.[44] And when John's disciples complain that Jesus is attracting all men away from John, John rejoices and calls on his followers to bear witness to his nothingness as compared with the Greater One.[45] So much energy and so much space were not used by the Fourth Evangelist for academic reasons: the writer of the Gospel knew followers of the Baptist who refused to accept Christ, and knew them in sufficient numbers to warrant his paying them special attention. Now tradition almost universally fixes the origin of the Fourth Gospel in Ephesus, and it is precisely in Ephesus that Acts tells us of the presence of men who "knew only the baptism of John."[46] All of these are assumed to be Christian in some degree, but it requires no very great imagination to think of others baptized by John who were unconverted.

---

[41] Compare, *e. g.*, the lists in Dr. Walter Bauer's ***Das Johannesevangelium***, 2nd ed., Tübingen, Mohr, 1925.

In other words, in Ephesus we find a contact between the followers of Jesus and those of John. In the Fourth Gospel we find a highly characteristic vocabulary, which reappears in the writings of a group who claim to be descendants of the Baptist's disciples. May there not very well be a connection between these two facts?

---

[42] John 1:8.

[43] 1:21–23.

[44] 1:34.

[45] 3:22–30.

[46] Acts 18:24–19:7.

An affirmative answer to this question seems to me to be made almost certain by Dr. Reitzenstein's recently published researches into the early history of Christian baptism. He has, I think, demonstrated that affinities between Christianity and Mandæanism extend beyond linguistic contacts into the realm of ceremonial, a realm peculiarly tenacious of past inheritances. As a matter of fact, many of the second- and third-century Christian rites have long defied explanation. No one knows why oil was poured into the baptismal water, or why a candle or a staff of olive wood was dipped into it. No one knows why persons baptized were required to make their communions immediately, nor why the eucharistic liturgy on such occasions differed so greatly from the ordinary service. No one knows why anointing was made the principal rite in confirmation, and there has been as yet no completely satisfactory explanation of the universal requirement of baptismal sponsors.

Now, Dr. Reitzenstein has showed that all these ceremonies exist in Mandæanism, and that they exist in a form and in a context that makes their meaning plain; in other words, he has shown that Mandæanism has preserved these ceremonies in a purer state than has Christianity. From this fact he draws the conclusion that the common source in both cases is the practice of the Baptist. The Mandæans have been reasonably faithful to the tradition, while the Christians have combined it with an independent theory of baptism, with the result that the rites are no longer really intelligible.

This argument of Dr. Reitzenstein's, to be sure, falls a little short of being wholly conclusive. Granting that the Mandæan and the Christian rituals have been influenced by a common early source, it does not quite follow that this source was John the Baptist; we do not know what other influences may have been at work in the welter of syncretism that pervaded the first century. And yet there is no denying that the Baptist offers fewer difficulties than does any other source. We have not only to explain the appearance of certain ceremonies in Christianity; we have to explain their almost universal acceptance there. And this tells against the theory of influence by gnostic or mystery religion practices, since it would be hard to understand why practically *all* Christians agreed to accept ceremonies coming from such a source or sources. On the other hand, it is easy enough to see why Palestinian Christians would conform their baptismal practice to John's; if Jesus had been so baptized, surely his followers should copy the same ritual—and a general Palestinian practice would inevitably affect the extra-Palestinian church. Hence Dr. Reitzenstein's conclusions must be admitted to have a very high degree of probability.

If they are correct, we must reform to some degree our conception of first-century Palestinian Judaism. It by no means rested solidly and exclusively on the Old Testament tradition. As we have long known, the Essenes, whose right to be considered good Jews was undenied, drew on traditions that are probably Persian for their practices, and it would appear now that the Baptist did the same. And John could never have won the support he received—with even the hierarchy refusing to condemn him publicly [47]—if his concepts and usages had been wholly foreign to the people. Here we have a potent warning against construing the Palestinian religion too strictly according to later Rabbinic models.[48]

We gain, moreover, a better picture of the Baptist's independence and of his influence on Christianity. Dr. Reitzenstein, indeed, argues that this influence extended even to Jesus, who drew copiously on his predecessor's teaching.[49] His proofs here are not very adequate,[50] and yet there is nothing improbable in the theory. Although Jesus' and John's ways diverged, although the former looked on his predecessor as the last saint of the old order and not the first saint of the Kingdom, yet to Jesus John's preaching was from heaven,[51] and even surpassed the authentic note of prophecy.[52] So it would be almost a miracle if Jesus' preaching did not often approve and echo the message of John, to whose baptism Jesus himself submitted. Yet the possibility of our being able to identify actual passages is, I am afraid, very remote.

---

[47] Mark 11: 31–33.

[48] Compare the next chapter.

[49] Particularly in his *Das mandäische Buch,* cited above. Dr. Reitzenstein's conclusions have been widely extended by Dr. Robert Eisler, above all in his *Iesous* (compare below). He goes so far as to argue that the temptation story originally was told of the Baptist, not of Jesus (ii, p. 118 ff.).

[50] Compare Lidzbarski's criticism in the preface to his edition of the Ginza.

[51] Mark 11: 30. Jesus' own answer to his question is obvious.

We turn next to another problem of very recent origin, the value of the testimony of the Old Russian version of Josephus' *The Jewish War*. Our traditional texts of this book do not mention Jesus at all, and the existence of a non-Greek version was practically unknown to the western world until Nathaniel Bonwetsch called attention to it in 1893.[53] As, however, Old Russian is a peculiarly inaccessible tongue, no one was much the wiser until 1906, when A. J. Berendts published a German translation of passages bearing on Jesus,[54] and a complete German rendition of the whole work was not available until 1927.[55] There is no English translation as yet, but the more important passages will be found in the third volume of Dr. H. St. John Thackeray's edition of Josephus in the *Loeb Classical Library*.[56]

---

[52] Luke 7: 24–28 = Matt. 11: 7–11.

[53] In a supplement to Harnack's *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, i, p. 917.

[54] "Die Zeugnisse von Christentum im slavischer . . . Josephus," in *TU*, n. F., xiv, 4.

[55] *Flavius Josephus vom jüdischen Kriege*, Dorpat, 1925–1927. Edited by A. J. Berendts and K. Grass.

[56] London, Heinemann; New York, Putnam's, 1928. The translation is enriched with notes by Dr. Eisler. An earlier English version of the sections dealing with Jesus and the Baptist was made by Mr. Mead for his *The Gnostic John* (pages 103–110).

At present the basic problem is the relation of the Old Russian form of *The Jewish War* to the familiar Greek text. The divergencies between the two are considerable, and interpretation of these divergencies is a complex task, especially since the number of real specialists in Josephus study is sadly few. But a determined attack has been made on the problem by Dr. Robert Eisler, in a book of monumental size and of amazing erudition, his *Iesous*.[57] He has reached the following conclusions:[58]

Josephus, as he himself tells us in his preface, first composed the *War* in Aramaic for the "upper barbarians"; Dr. Eisler[59] thinks he had in mind both Jews and non-Jews of the Orient, especially the Parthians. But there is some evidence that this Aramaic version was never actually circulated.[60] A Greek translation, however, was made of it, which Josephus revised and adapted for Græco-Roman Gentile readers, above all for Vespasian and his household. All this took place in the year 72. During the next decade the book was more or less thoroughly rewritten, and our Greek texts of the *War* are descended from the result.

But, Dr. Eisler contends, the first unrevised Greek translation was likewise used by the Greek-speaking Jews of the Roman Empire, for whom it bore the title of *The Capture of Jerusalem.*[61] Compared with the later revision—and still more when compared with the carefully corrected Antiquities—it was carelessly written and was full of inaccuracies, although for the none too savory career of Josephus himself it is often highly illuminating.

---

[57] Heidelberg, Winter, 1929. An English translation of much of this work is in preparation.

[58] Dr. Eisler's theory is conveniently summarized on pages xxxix–xlix of his preface.

[59] i, p. 334–340.

[60] i, p. 493.

A copy of this unrevised edition reached the Old Russian translator in the thirteenth century, as part of the crypto-Jewish movement familiar throughout all Europe in the later Middle Ages. That is, many Jews who had been forcibly "converted" to Christianity, conformed only in externals, while they privately and among themselves maintained the faith of their fathers. And by way of revenge they carried on a Judaizing and unitarian propaganda among Christians; they were responsible for some strange mediæval heresies and sects, and in part likewise for the Polish unitarianism of the Reformation period.

In particular, one or more of the mediæval groups of separatists took the name "Josephini," which, according to Dr. Eisler,[62] is derived from "Josephus." That is, for their views about Christ and Christianity these sectaries claimed the Jewish historian's authority. And, as a matter of fact, barring a few palpably Christian touches,[63] the statements of the Old Russian version of the *War* are just such as these crypto-Jews would have wished.

---

[61] Περὶ ἁλώσεως Ἱερουσαλήμ. Dr. Eisler always cites it as the *Halosis.* He argues further that its very earliest title was simply "The Capture," *i. e.,* "of Josephus" (i, p. 246–250).

[62] i, 392–399.

[63] Probably due to half-hearted censoring.

Dr. Eisler believes, indeed, that the text can be restored exactly as Josephus wrote it, and his reconstruction can be studied in Dr. Thackeray's edition as well as in his own volumes. He goes still further by holding he can restore as well the original text of the famous passage in *Antiquities*, XVIII, iii, 3, and the result will be found in his *Iesous*.[64] How far his conclusions are tenable it is much too soon to say, for his argument is highly intricate, and it will require testing at an infinity of points. Yet the passages as he has reconstructed them give a real impression of genuineness. Josephus must have said *something* about Christianity, and that something was undoubtedly so hostile that Christian censorship deleted it from our texts.[65] And the statements in the Old Russian version convey just the right tone of supercilious contempt; if they are not what Josephus wrote, he must have written something very like them.

On the other hand, few will be able to follow Dr. Eisler in his belief in the verbal infallibility of his texts. We might grant everything he says about Josephus' sources of information, and we might perhaps even grant that Josephus copied Pilate's official report of Jesus' trial.[66] Yet the reports of procurators were not invariably models of objective precision—to say the least—while Dr. Eisler in other contexts proves abundantly that Josephus' ignorance was often crass, and that, when his own interests or prejudices were concerned, he could be a reckless liar. So, quite apart from the peril of confiding too far in texts of uncertain origin, dubiously transmitted and hypothetically restored, Dr. Eisler himself has taught us the danger of accepting too trustingly Josephus' assertions about a religion which he hated and despised.

---

[64] i, p. 84–88.

[65] The tradition of our Greek manuscripts of Josephus is Christian, not Jewish.

[66] Dr. Eisler attributes the Old Russian account of Jesus' condemnation in great part to Pilate. But compare below, page 169.

IV. THE BACKGROUND

The purpose of Gospel criticism is to recover, as far as may be, the most authentic form of Jesus' words and the earliest information about his acts. The next task of the student is to place this knowledge against its proper background, the secular and religious conditions of Palestine in the first half of the first century. Here, at the moment, the most pressing problem is the value we should assign Talmudic Judaism as evidence for Palestinian teaching during the ministry of Jesus.

The past history of Christian Talmudic study is virtually negligible. Talmudic literature seems almost to have been produced with the purpose of making it inaccessible to anyone except professional Jewish students, so much so that a technical knowledge of the Talmud is usually possible only to those who begin to study it in childhood. The linguistic difficulties are notorious. Talmudic lack of system is appalling, and experts say that a real index to the Talmud is an impossibility. Nor does a non-Jew generally gain much help from Jewish specialists. The latter frequently commit the literature to memory, and they write primarily for the benefit of those similarly equipped. Exact references, consequently, appear a needless luxury—to the torment of the Gentile patiently endeavoring to follow an argument. And, to add to our exasperation, Talmudic commentaries are frequently so carelessly printed as to suggest that to Jewish publishers proof reading is an unknown art.

As a result of these and other difficulties, Christians in the past have normally left the Talmud severely alone; if they quoted it at all, they contented themselves chiefly with the extracts collected by John Lightfoot in his *Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ.*[1] But, while such second hand citation is always unsatisfactory, it was doubly so in this instance, for Lightfoot's compilation—and the same is true of most other compilations—was made and annotated for polemical purposes. So modern Jews justly complain of the caricature that resulted, although, it must be said in partial extenuation, until recent times Jews have done little to make non-Jewish understanding of the Talmud easier.

To-day, however, such progress has been made. In English we have M. L. Rodkinson's translation,[2] indifferently done and rather incomplete,[3] and yet adequate enough for the general reader; its great defect is the absence of references to the pages of the original. Vastly better, of course, is Lazarus Goldschmidt's German edition,[4] in which the translation is printed page for page with the original; it is on this edition that most of us necessarily depend. The Jerusalem Talmud—so-called—has been rendered into French by M. Schwab,[5] and thus an otherwise almost totally inaccessible source has been opened to non-Jews. The Mishnah is being elaborately edited by Dr. Georg Beer and Dr. Oskar Holtzmann; it has been appearing in parts for nearly a generation and completion of the work seems likely to be postponed for some generations to come. In English the S. P. C. K. has issued a few selected tractates, very well edited, and with the special merit of giving the Tosephta as well as the Mishnah. And there are other translations of varying merits.

---

[1] 1658–1678.

[2] New York, 1896–1903.

[3] The editors used their own judgment in omitting what they felt to be secondary matter.

[4] 1897–1922.

Outside the Talmud much is being done in making available early Rabbinic writings; these need not be listed here, although mention should be made of the herculean labors of the late August Wünsche. But for the New Testament all systematized collections of extracts—and, for that matter, perhaps, all other translations—have been superseded by the five massive volumes by H. L. Strack and Dr. Paul Billerbeck [6]; these are probably more indispensable than any other single work.

Modern systematic discussion of the material has been chiefly in the hands of the Jewish specialists. This is not only right and proper, but is usually essential; even when most Christians have learned to read the texts, they are extraordinarily apt to misunderstand them. Christian students are trained to think systematically and theologically, but both "system" and "theology" are alien to the Rabbinic mind. In 1880, for instance, there was published posthumously Ferdinand Weber's *System der altsynagogalen palästinischen Theologie*,[7] which at its time won great favor and was quoted extensively as authoritative. Yet, we may believe, no Jew from Abraham's day to our own ever held the "system" that Weber painstakingly pieced together; what he actually gave us was the theology that westerners might have deduced from the Jewish premises.

---

[5] 1878–1890.

[6] *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch,* Munich, Beck, 1922–1928.

If we really wish to understand Judaism, we must rid ourselves resolutely of such presuppositions. Judaism, assuredly, holds certain dogmas, and holds them tenaciously. God is One: He has created the universe; He has chosen Israel; He has given Israel Torah; He has prepared for Israel a future. Without these articles of belief there can, it would seem, be no such thing as Judaism religiously conceived.[8] But while Israel holds dogmas, she emphatically does not hold a dogmatic theology: she has never held one in the past, she does not hold one to-day, and never can hold one as long as her religion keeps its historic continuity. To form a doctrinal theology dogmas are not enough. A metaphysic is needed that will give the dogmas their place in a systematized and unified conception of the universe as a whole, and such a metaphysic is foreign to the spirit of Judaism. Jewish students, no doubt, may master a western philosophical system, and may even adopt it as their own. But in so doing they commit nobody but themselves. In the Middle Ages there were Jewish Aristotelian scholastics of high ability, but mediæval Judaism, unlike mediæval Christianity, never committed itself to Aristotelianism.

---

[7] Later editions, with varying titles, in 1886 and 1897.

[8] This is not to say that Jews explicitly isolate the above five dogmas in any creedal sense.

The true Jewish mind is not unlike the modern American mind; it moves easily in the realm of the concrete and practical, but is apt to be suspicious of abstractions. To illustrate God's love or His justice, Rabbis will be ready with multitudes of stories, and yet one will search Jewish literature vainly for an attempt to define either "love" or "justice" exactly. We use the term "orthodox Judaism," but it is a misnomer; the orthodox Jew is simply one who maintains ancestral practices; two orthodox Jews may and—so far as an outsider has a right to judge—often do differ in almost every conceivable speculative matter. The term "heretic" in its Christian sense of "one who errs intellectually about the doctrines of the faith" cannot be translated into Talmudic at all.

The beginner in the study of Judaism, consequently, should remember that one good book by a modern learned Jew may tell him more than a dozen volumes of the traditional type of Christian polemic. From so saintly a scholar as the late Solomon Schechter, for instance, anyone should be proud to learn, and his *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*[9] should be on the shelves of every Christian clergyman. Of works bearing concretely on the New Testament, Israel Abraham's *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*[10] is of high value, while Dr. C. G. Montefiore's *The Synoptic Gospels*[11] is just about indispensable, and his *Judaism and St. Paul*[12] should be universally read. To descend to a more popular level, photographically accurate pictures of the workings of typically Jewish minds can be gleaned from Israel Zangwill's novels, above all from his *Children of the Ghetto*.[13]

In speaking of the work of the Jewish scholars, however, we touch on our next topic, and it is a very thorny one. Rabbinic sources rarely go back before A. D. 135, while it is with extreme rarity indeed that they carry us into the period when the temple was still standing.[14] When the question is raised as to how far this later Judaism represents the religion taught in Jesus' day, consequently, we find so learned a specialist as Dr. Montefiore confessing, "I must honestly declare that it is not for me to answer, or to attempt to answer it!"[15] We, however, must make the attempt. And the question resolves itself into two. How far does the teaching of the Rabbis of the Talmudic and later periods represent the teaching of the Rabbis' precursors—primarily the Pharisaic scribes? And: How far did the teaching of these precursors control contemporary Judaism as a whole?

---

[9] London and New York, Macmillan, 1909; often reprinted.

[10] Cambridge University Press, 1917–1924.

[11] London, Macmillan, 1909; 2nd edition, 1927.

[12] New York, Dutton; 1915.

[13] First published in 1892; many editions.

[14] As a matter of fact the vast bulk of Rabbinic writing is later than the fourth century.

[15] *Judaism and St. Paul*, p. 86.

Divergent answers to these questions are represented in masterly guise by two very famous books, *Die Religion des Judentums* by Wilhelm Bousset,[16] and *Judaism* by Dr. George Foot Moore.[17] Dr. Moore's thesis is that Judaism within the period (roughly) B. C. 100–A. D. 250 is a unit, fairly uniform throughout its development and issuing in Rabbinism by a necessary process of evolution. The Talmudic sources, therefore, are on the whole as valid for the earlier period as the later. Other movements in the Judaism of this age were vagaries; almost as far outside the true current as the teachings of such men as Basilides or Valentinus were outside the normal course of Christian thinking. And Dr. Moore carries this thesis so far as even to rule that the apocalyptic writers are imperfectly "Jewish." With this general construction, I believe, most Jews of to-day agree; they view Jesus and his teachings against a thoroughly Talmudic background.

Bousset's theory is sharply opposed. He regards the Judaism of Jesus' day as a highly multiform phenomenon, within which pre-Rabbinism was only one element, and by no means a dominant one. This pre-Rabbinism itself, moreover, was in many regards different from the teaching set forth in the second and later centuries; in particular it was far more rigid and pessimistic. It is therefore a mistake to take the Talmudic doctrine as really representative of the Judaism that Jesus knew.

---

[16] 1902; 3rd edition, revised by Hugo Gressmann, 1926.
[17] Harvard University Press, 1927.

An intermediate position is that of Mr. R. Travers Herford in his *The Pharisees.*[18] He holds even more strongly than does Dr. Moore to the essential unity of pre-Rabbinism and Rabbinism: they were altogether the same thing. Not only that, but both are the legitimate heirs of the Old Testament; the spirit of even the post-Talmudists is in substantial agreement with the spirit of the Psalmists. Yet, in Jesus' day this pre-Rabbinism—which is the same thing as Pharisaism—was something of an esoteric movement, whose tenets were not familiar to the people at large: "unless a man stood within the Pharisaic circle he could have no means of knowing what they meant by Halachah or even exactly what they taught."[19] None the less, "the great majority of the people sided with the Pharisees, followed their lead and held them in honor and reverence."[20]

Which of these three opinions is right? The question is of the utmost importance, since without a correct answer we can form no just opinion of the contemporary significance of Jesus' work.

---

[18] London and New York, Macmillan, 1924. Compare his earlier *Pharisaism* (1912) and his later *Judaism in the New Testament Period* (London, Lindsey Press, 1928).

[19] *The Pharisees,* p. 207.

[20] Page 98.

Let us state the problem more concretely. When a modern Jewish Rabbi opens, say, the Book of Enoch, he feels much as a Christian feels when he opens some such gnostic work as the Pistis Sophia. Its contents have only a shadowy connection with the religion he knows, and he finds himself in a grotesque and distasteful world. That such a writing should be held to represent a legitimate stage of his faith's evolution strikes him as unpardonable perversity. Only amateurs use gnostic documents in constructing pictures of genuine second century Christianity; what right, then—it may be asked—had Bousset to use the apocalyptic documents in constructing a picture of first century Judaism?

The parallel, however, is inexact. In the case of Christianity we have in the New Testament abundant evidence of the nature of Christian teaching in the pre-gnostic stage, and it is perfectly clear that formal gnosticism is no legitimate development from these teachings. On the contrary, the gnostic tendencies were already familiar to the New Testament writers, and were explicitly rejected by them; not here and there only, but universally and uncompromisingly.

In the case of Judaism, on the contrary, there is no such unified stage of earlier authoritative teaching. We have long since given up speaking of an "Old Testament theology," for no such thing exists. The Old Testament is a vast congeries of literatures, setting forth a vast variety of religious concepts, and these have only a very few central tenets in common.[21] That throughout there is a thread leading straight into Rabbinism is indubitable: we call it "priestly" in its earlier appearance and "scribal" in its later. But even this thread contains elements that became a profound embarrassment to the Rabbis: the Book of Ezekiel is a famous example. And there is a labyrinth of other threads as well; there is a multitude of Old Testament writers who passionately denounce priests, scribes and all their works. Moreover in the later Old Testament period an apocalyptic element makes itself more and more strongly felt, in very extensive editing of the earlier prophetic writings, in large sections of books such as Zechariah, and culminating in the entire Book of Daniel. That is, as far as Old Testament development is concerned, there was no possible way of predicting whether later Judaism would become Rabbinic or apocalyptic, or perhaps something else.

Accordingly, since Judaism has no meaning except as the developed religion of the Old Testament, we have no possible right to fix on Pharisaic scribism as its sole legitimate type in the first century. The first century Jews themselves did not do so. Essenism, for instance, often contradicted Pharisaism sharply, but Josephus, himself a Pharisee, counts Essenism as one of the three recognized Jewish "philosophies,"[22] as legitimately Jewish as Sadduceanism or even Pharisaism. Before A. D. 70, at any rate, the right of the Essenes to inclusion in the commonwealth of Israel was never denied by authority; they mixed freely with the rest of the people, and were held by them in great honor. Now we know little enough about the exact doctrines held by the Essenes, and still less about their origin, but there can be no doubt that certain of their concepts and practices were derived from extra-Old Testament sources. So the fact that in Jesus' day this party enjoyed full toleration speaks volumes for the even freer toleration of less radical views.[23]

---

[21] In a sense, of course, there is no such thing as a "New Testament theology," either. But the limits of variation in the New Testament are far narrower.

The toleration of the Essenes and the other "philosophies" in Jesus' day was possible because the official discipline of Israel was not yet in the hands of the Pharisees, but was administered by the various sanhedrins. As every village had one of these with seven members, the total number of sanhedrists—or "elders"—in Palestine must have run up high into the thousands, and only a small proportion of them could have been Pharisees. Now Josephus can write that "whatever the people do about worship, prayers and sacrifices, they do according to their (the Pharisees') direction," and

---

[22] *BJ*, II, viii 2; *Antt.*, XIII, 1, 9, etc. In *Antt.*, XVIII, i, he counts *four* philosophies.

[23] All the above remains true, even if we accept Schürer's dictum that "Essenism is primarily only superlative Pharisaism" (*GJV*, ii, p. 673).

"when (the Sadducees) become magistrates . . . they conform to what the Pharisee says, for otherwise the multitude would not endure them." [24] Pharisaic influence was assuredly predominating. And yet it was far from being in complete control. The Pharisees were able to control the temple ceremonial—this seems to be the point in the conformation of the Sadducean "magistrates"—but they were not yet able to force non-Pharisees to accept Pharisaic ideals of practice; if anyone preferred Sadducean, Essene or other rules, the Pharisees could not stop him.

Their opportunity came after the year 70. The destruction of the temple left them as the only party in Israel with a programme adapted to the new order and with an organization capable of taking charge. A rough parallel is the condition of Russia in 1917, when the Communists alone knew exactly what they wanted and were fully prepared to take it. The Russian people were by no means all communistically minded, but the sole alternative to communism was anarchy. Conditions in Palestine were much the same. The shattering calamity had swept away the whole Jewish organization, but Jochanan ben Zakkai and his able lieutenants stepped into the breach. The old centre of unity was gone, but a new centre could be found in a uniform observance of the Law on Pharisaic principles. So the support of divergent practices ceased, and Sadducees and Essenes disappeared from history. The triumph of Pharisaism was complete, and the Pharisees themselves became gradually merged in Judaism as a whole, since the teaching everywhere was Pharisaic.

---

[24] *Antt.*, XVIII, i, 3–4.

We have now answered the second of our two questions on page 89 and are ready to attack the first: "How far does the teaching of the Rabbis of the Talmudic and later periods represent the teaching of the Rabbis' precursors, primarily the Pharisaic scribes?"

An important problem here is offered by apocalyptics, a subject in which Talmudic Judaism is only mildly interested. But by the year A. D. 135, when the formation of the Mishnic tradition begins in earnest, the Jews' practical experience of apocalyptics had been calamitous. The two ghastly wars of 66–70 and 130–135 were undertaken only with the hope of God's miraculous—*i. e.*, apocalyptic—intervention, and both wars issued in desolation. After two such tragedies it was easy to be wise; the apocalypticism that had seduced Israel into the appeal to battle was false and perilous to the last degree. So it is no accident that with the year 135 the production of Jewish apocalyptic writings suddenly ceases; the movement that produced so abundant a literature over a period of three centuries now came to an abrupt end.[25] And so we find laid down in the Mishnah, "He who speculates on four things, what is above, beneath, before, behind, for that man it would be better if he had not come into the world." [26]

---

[25] It is likewise no accident that the real origins of apocalyptic were in a *successful* war, the Maccabean uprising.

Consequently from the non-apocalyptic character of Rabbinic Judaism we have no conceivable right to argue that first century Judaism must have been equally non-apocalyptic. Nor have we any right to argue that because the Talmudic Rabbis rejected apocalyptics, their scribal precursors did likewise. No doubt, as was said above,[27] scribal and apocalyptic tendencies are logically independent, but it does not follow at all that the most legalistically minded scribe was uninterested in the possible near approach of the world's end. When Judas of Galilee led a revolt against the Romans in A. D. 6, and preached to the Jews that they could expect God's help only if they took the initiative, we certainly have an outburst of apocalyptic militarism. Pharisaic opposition to this revolt there may have been, but we hear nothing of it. What we do hear is that Judas in his rebellion had as his chief coadjutor one Saddouk, a Pharisee.[28]

Or to go down a century later, developed Rabbinic tradition is very clear that the Pharisees resisted strenuously the Messianic claimant Barcochba. Indeed, the Talmud describes how they executed him for his pretensions. When "he said to the Rabbis, 'I am Messiah,' they answered him, 'It is written of Messiah that he discerns and judges; let us see if he can do so.' When they found this beyond his power they put him to death." The story is meant to be highly edifying[29] and expresses, no doubt, exactly what Talmudists thought ought to be done to an apocalyptic revolutionary. But the story does not happen to be true. Barcochba was executed by the Romans. And he carried with him to his death the devoted support of Akiba, the greatest Rabbi of them all, who was likewise slain.

---

[26] *Chagigah*, ii, 1.

[27] Page 92.

[28] *Antt.*, XVIII, i.

Such instances ought to be sufficient proof that Talmudic disapproval of apocalyptics must not be read back into the minds of all early first century Pharisaic scribes. Nor should we limit this caution to apocalyptics alone, for Talmudists often have no hesitation in revising the past in any matter that does not seem right to the mind of a later age. A famous case concerns the presidency of the Sanhedrin. In the first century the president was always the high priest and the Sanhedrin was by no means made up exclusively of Pharisaic scribes. To later Jews, however, this seemed wrong. After A. D. 70 only Rabbis gathered to decide legal problems, with the result that the Sanhedrin was regularly pictured also as composed of Rabbis.[30] The high priest, then, seemed a most inappropriate president, for he was often notoriously unlearned in the Law, and—horror of horrors—was frequently a Sadducee. And so in the third and later centuries of our era it was generally asserted that the real president of the Sanhedrin was a very learned Rabbi called by the title "Nasi," and that by his side stood an almost equally learned assistant, the "Ab Beth Din." [31]

---

[29] It is found in *Sanhedrin*, 93b.

[30] Perhaps the late first century "College of Jamnia" lingered in Rabbinical memories as the true Sanhedrin.

Or, to go back to the Mishnic period, the Mishnah (*Sanhedrin,* vii, 2) provides that the execution of the death sentence by burning is to be executed by pushing a heated bar of lead down the culprit's throat. This decision appears to have been adopted early in the second century, and an aged Rabbi, Eleazar ben Zadok, protested. According to the Tosephta [32] he said, "When I was a child I was once carried out on my father's shoulder to see a priest's daughter who had committed adultery; they surrounded her with faggots and so burnt her." That is, he was old enough to remember how things were actually done when the Sanhedrin was in control, and he remembered that the decision of his contemporaries had no relation to tradition. His contemporaries, however, were not impressed. According to the Tosephta they waved aside his evidence with the words, "Thou wast a child, and a child cannot give evidence." The Mishnah is more frank: "The court at that time did not possess accurate knowledge."

The last sentence is particularly revealing: the second century codifiers of the tradition did not permit their work to be hampered by memories of what formerly had been the official interpretations of the Law. All power was now in the Pharisaic Rabbis' hands, and, even though they were not precisely operating with a clean slate, they could at least clean the slate whenever what was written thereon displeased them: "The court at that time did not possess accurate knowledge." The catastrophe of the year 70 meant a mighty breach with the past.

---

[31] Any modern monograph on the Sanhedrin gives and discusses the (rather complicated) evidence.

[32] ix, 11a.

And this breach was wider than is generally realized. When, for instance, the Rabbis of the second century drew up the criminal law proceedings that are incorporated in *Sanhedrin*, they were not hampered by considerations of practicality; since criminal jurisdiction had long since passed out of Jewish hands, their decisions were wholly academic. Everyone who reads the provisions of the tractate ought to realize that many of its provisions are unworkable; it provides, for instance, that after the trial of a capital case all the judges must remain awake all the next night and spend the time discussing the evidence before a verdict can be given! [33] So we may note in passing that unless *Sanhedrin's* rules are confirmed by other evidence, the tractate should not be quoted for the purpose of criticizing the Gospels—a principle that has often been flagrantly ignored by writers on the trial of Jesus.[34]

---

[33] v, 5.

[34] We may likewise observe that in capital cases *Sanhedrin's* rules presuppose a Jewish court bearing responsibility for death sentences—a condition that did not exist under the rule of the procurators.

Before proceeding to other concrete instances of a change in attitude during the period A. D. 30–150, we should remember a further general principle. The some six thousand Pharisees of Jesus' day formed an elite of voluntary observants, whose specific rules bound only themselves. If anyone wished to withdraw from Pharisaism, he was free to do so without forfeiting his membership in Israel. The Pharisees themselves, past doubt, thought that their rules were of divine obligation, since a correct interpretation of God's Law is equally God's Law—and of the correctness of their interpretations the Pharisees had no doubt. They felt that they had, if not quite a monopoly on salvation, at least a monopoly on the highest degree of salvation. So if non-Pharisees wished to attain to the same excellence of observance, they could do it only by becoming Pharisees, and such converts were welcomed. But if non-Pharisees declined to adopt Pharisaism, the Pharisees felt that they themselves were in no wise responsible for the fate of these persons.

By the middle of the second century all this was changed. The Rabbis were now consciously legislating not for a group of special devotees but for all Israel, and deliberate flouting of the Rabbis' decision now meant possible excommunication. A more humane outlook was consequently inevitable, since the abilities of farmers, shoemakers, cooks and what not must be taken into consideration.

This slackening of Pharisaic rigor did not, to be sure, take the form of decreasing the number of commandments to be observed; on the contrary, the multiplication of precepts went on year after year indefinitely. The Judaism of the sixth Christian century was very much more legalistic than it was five hundred years earlier, in the sense that there were very many more laws to be learned and kept. But—and this is the all essential point—the Rabbi of the sixth century did not view a breach of the Law anything like as severely as did a first century Pharisee. The Pharisees required their adherents to keep their tradition with substantial completeness. It was difficult, but it was within human reach, and, there were many first century Pharisees who could say with St. Paul, "As touching the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless." [35] In the sixth century nobody could say this. The corpus of legislation had swelled to such mammoth dimensions that no one could possibly know it all—still less keep it—and all that was required of the Jewish man of the street was that he should make an honest effort to do the best he reasonably could.

As far as I can make out, the change took place somewhere around the year A. D. 100, and it was due to the immense authority of Akiba. And he laid down, once and for all, the fundamental principle: "God rules the world in mercy, but according to the preponderance of good or bad in human acts." When this principle was stated and accepted, Pharisaism lost its chief reason for continuance as a special party.[36] For now substantially complete observance of the whole Law was no longer required for salvation, and the most the proudest Pharisee could hope for, in contrast to his less meticulous neighbor, was a somewhat higher seat in exactly the same heaven.

---

[35] Phil. 3:6.

Akiba thus abolished at a single stroke the whole burden of the Law. Granted reasonably good early instruction and the constant presence of competent advisers—and Judaism saw to it that both were always provided—it would be a poor Jew indeed who could not succeed in keeping the Law more often than he violated it. In fact, if we are to criticize Akiba for anything it would be for making salvation too easy; for a precept that undoubtedly resulted in letting down moral bars. Christian criticism of Talmudic Judaism is so often grotesquely false that we ought not to cite it, and instead we will quote the words of a great and understanding modern Jew, Israel Zangwill. He sums up the consequences of Akiba's "51%" theory thus: "They lived and died, these Sons of the Covenant . . . joyfully ground under the perpetual rotary wheel of ritualism, good-humored withal and casuistic like all people whose religion stands much upon ceremony; inasmuch as a ritual law comes to count equally with a moral, and a man is not half bad who does three-fourths of his duty." [37]

---

[36] It persisted, it seems, for another century, but no one knows when it finally disappeared.

[37] *Children of the Ghetto*, chapter xii.

"A man is not half bad who does three-fourths of his duty." Naturally only the lower orders would place religion on such a concrete arithmetical basis, but Akiba removed a weight from the shoulders of everyone, from the lowest to the highest. No modern Jew feels it necessary to keep the whole Law or, I believe, even attempts to do so. In "orthodox" circles everywhere many rules are kept most strictly; Christians, in fact, are often amazed when they discover how much of the code a not particularly well trained Jew can know and observe. But there is always an infinite mass of minute precepts—known only to a few expert Rabbis—that no one troubles about overmuch, and when a "layman" undertakes to learn and follow these, he is apt to gain a reputation for oddity. Nor does an error or omission in ceremonial matters disturb greatly the conscience of most Hebrews; it would have been better if the mistake had not occurred, but there is no great cause for self-reproach.

Consequently modern Jews are generally unable to comprehend the New Testament reproaches directed against the Pharisaic legalism. No answering response is awakened on reading, for instance, that the Pharisees "bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders,"[38] for the orthodox Jew cannot see how anyone could so describe practices which to him are a joy. In dealing with Paulinism the difficulty reaches a maximum. Jewish books on St. Paul are almost invariably disappointing to the Christian reader,[39] and Dr. Schechter very frankly gave the reason: "The Apostle himself I do not profess to understand. . . . A curious alternative is always haunting our exegesis of the Epistles. Either the theology of the Rabbis must be wrong, its conception of God debasing, its leading motives materialistic and coarse, and its teachers lacking in enthusiasm and spirituality, or the Apostle to the Gentiles is quite unintelligible." [40] It did not occur to Dr. Schechter that there is a third alternative, that the theology of the Rabbis that he knew so well and the theology of the Pharisees among whom St. Paul moved were not at all the same thing.[41] And one very great difference lay in the severity with which deviations from traditional practice were judged.

---

[38] Matt. 23:4.

The change had its effect on the Jewish doctrine of God. A subject much debated nowadays is the extent to which Jews in the New Testament period addressed God as "Father," and the contention is more and more vigorously made that in this regard Jesus introduced nothing new; that "Father," in a personal as well as in a national sense, was very common in Jewish prayer. Abundant evidence for the practice can, in fact, be adduced from Rabbinic sources in the later period; how far is this evidence valid for the earlier days as well?

---

[39] Dr. Montefiore's *Judaism and St. Paul* is the great exception.

[40] *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, p. 18.

[41] It is not, of course, implied that St. Paul's positive conclusions would have been more acceptable to later Jewish generations than they were to his own contemporaries. No orthodox Jew could be expected to approve the widening of Judaism into universalism. But if St. Paul had been converted in the fifth century instead of the first, he would have had less to say about the burden of the Law.

The most relevant quotation I can give here is Romans 8:15: "For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of sonship, wherein we cry, Abba, Father." Now, however one-sided and even morbid St. Paul's experiences in Pharisaism may have been, to anyone brought up from birth in a Pharisaic household the ordinary Jewish liturgical formulas would have become an integral part of his being. And if throughout his preconversion life he had been accustomed in these formulas to use "Abba, Father," the passage in Romans loses all meaning.[42] This seems to me to be decisive. It is corroborated by the conclusions reached in Strack-Billerbeck:[43] "In the pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha, God is comparatively rarely spoken of as the Father of Israel and the individual Israelites; the most frequent use of the Father-name of God is in addresses to God. 'Father' as a true title of God, so that by it God's name is paraphrased and replaced, as in Matt. 6:4 and elsewhere in the New Testament, probably occurs only once in the pseudepigrapha.[44]

---

[42] When a modern Christian is converted (say) from Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism, he may and often does boast about the spiritual privileges now open to him. But he does not say, "Now I am being taught to address God as Father."

[43] i, p. 392 f.

[44] Testament of Judah 24:2.

. . . In the Rabbinic literature conditions are similar, but after the close of the first Christian century the Father-name is used more frequently as a title of God."

One further very accurate illustration should be sufficient to illustrate the change in spirit from pre-Rabbinic Pharisaism to Rabbinism. A passage that has caused endless debate in the past is Mark 7:11–12; did the Pharisaic scribes really rule that the Corban vow forbade a man to care for his father? Most Jewish scholars reply with an indignant negative, which is echoed by Mr. Herford, who even asserts that "the inference is legitimate that Jesus had no close acquaintance with the tradition he denounced." [45] And there cannot be the slightest doubt that the bulk of the Talmudic evidence is squarely on the side of declaring vows null and void, if they cause material suffering to one's parents. Yet in the Mishnah we read as follows: [46] "A man in Beth-Horon once by a vow deprived his father of any benefit from him. When he married off his (own) son he said to another, House and court are given to you as a gift, but they belong to you only that my father may come and eat the banquet with us. The other replied, If they belong to me, they are dedicated to God. He said to him, I did not give them to you that you should dedicate them to God. He replied, You gave them to me only that you and your father might eat and drink together and be reconciled, and that the guilt might be upon his head. When the matter came before the Wise, they ruled, Every gift, which cannot be dedicated when he (the receiver) dedicates it, is no gift."

---

[45] *The Pharisees,* p. 206.

[46] *Nedarim,* v, 6.

The sense is clear. The son, who had invoked the Corban vow with regard to his father—a vow, moreover, from which his father would actually suffer [47]—now tried to evade it by a fictitious gift of the property to a third person, a device that the Rabbis prohibited. So circuitous a method never would have been adopted if there had been any simpler escape from the vow; in later centuries the Rabbis would have annulled the unfilial act from the start, and there never would have been any problem.

We could go on multiplying instances, but enough have been accumulated to prove our point abundantly: As compared with the teaching of the Pharisaic scribes whom Jesus knew, the developed doctrine of the Talmud is a reformed religion. And the reforms followed to a very real degree the direction of Jesus' teaching, the Rabbis of the later Talmudic period coming to accept doctrines that Jesus had preached many years before. So great, in fact, were the changes that a fifth century Rabbi would have seemed a dangerous revolutionary to an early first century scribe. I believe I am not putting it too strongly when I say that if Dr. Schechter had been alive in Jesus' day, he would have joined him in denouncing Pharisaic tenets and practices.

---

[47] Dr. Montefiore (*The Synoptic Gospels*, i, p. 150) draws a distinction between this kind of a vow and a merely foolish vow that might reflect on his father. But there is no question of the latter here.

I even believe we can scarcely escape going a step farther, in holding that Jesus was not without influence on the development of the straightest Rabbinism. Jewish Christianity persisted well into the second century, and was in close contact with the non-Christian Jews. No doubt the results of the association were often definitely negative, so that the very fact that Christians ruled one way would be a sufficient reason for the Rabbis taking the opposite course. But an infiltration of the spirit of Jesus' rulings was inevitable and was bound in time to produce its effect, especially when a long enough interval had elapsed to allow the Rabbis to forget that the impetus to a greater humaneness had actually come from him.

V. JESUS AND THE LAW

When, at last, we approach directly our study of Jesus' teaching, our first question is its formal basis. Here we can give only one answer: To Jesus, as to every other Jew of the day, the primary religious authority was the Old Testament. His fundamental doctrine, the coming realization of God's Kingdom, had no meaning apart from an unhesitating conviction of the sure fulfilment of God's promises as written in His Holy Word.

So to Jesus, as to every other Jew of the day, the citation of a relevant and unambiguous Old Testament passage put an end to any controversy, and we find him using this "text" method repeatedly. "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone." [1] "Offer for thy cleansing the things which Moses commanded." [2] "Did ye never read what David did?" [3] "A man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife." [4] "Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer?" [5] "David himself said in the Holy Spirit." [6] One or other of these citations may of course be secondary, but that Jesus did thus cite proof-texts—and cite them sincerely—is too firmly fixed in the Synoptic tradition to be upset.

---

[1] Luke 4:4; Matt. 4:4.

[2] Mark 1:44.

[3] Mark 2:25.

[4] Mark 10:7.

[5] Mark 11:17.

[6] Mark 12:36.

That he thought and acted as a devout and devoted Jew ought never to have been questioned by anyone. With much of the Pharisaic "tradition of the elders" we know he had no patience, but many of his contemporaries were equally hostile to it; the time was still distant when the Pharisaic triumph was to set the "oral law" side by side with the written law for every good Jew. Ritual ablutions before meals Jesus discarded, but on such ablutions the Old Testament is wholly silent. The frequent Pharisaic fasts he felt inconsistent with the position in which he and his disciples found themselves, but such fasts were notoriously works of supererogation without Old Testament authority. About the proper observance of the Sabbath he had distinctly his own ideas, but in support of these ideas he was always ready to quote Scripture. We never find him arraigned for the concrete violation of any practice actually ordained in the Old Testament. The existence of the Sabbath law is to him axiomatic. If he had disregarded the fast of the Day of the Atonement, we may be sure we should have heard about it. We may be quite certain that pork never passed his lips. And when we find him denouncing the Pharisees for "making broad" their phylacteries,[7] we find him actually accepting a practice supported only by tradition,[8] for the denunciation has no sense except on the assumption that phylacteries of unostentatious size should be worn by every Jew—Jesus included. When we add that the Temple was to him God's house,[9] whose cleansing devolved on him as an imperative duty, we can understand some of the difficulties St. Paul had to face when he undertook to convince the older apostles that a "Jesus after the flesh" they themselves should know no more. Such a passage, then, as "Go ye not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans,"[10] must faithfully represent Jesus' historic attitude.

---

[7] Matt. 23:5.

[8] Although, of course, he may have taken Ex. 13:9 literally.

Yet this does not take us to the bottom of the problem. As has been said already, the Old Testament is almost anything rather than a unity. Nobody can really accept it as a whole, and even in the most rudimentary attempts to systematize it for practical use there must be a constant picking and choosing. The scribes in their microscopic study of the Torah and their infinitely patient comparison of text with text encountered so many desperate problems that their exegetical devices are often marvels of ingenuity. How for instance are we to avoid the anthropomorphism inherent in the descriptions of God giving the Law to Moses? Very simply by remembering that it was the function of angels to mediate God's word to mankind; really it was the angels that brought the Law, and their presence must be assumed, even though Exodus says nothing about them; this bit of Haggadah we find no less than three times in the New Testament,[11] so taken for granted that St. Paul founds a serious argument on it.[12]

---

[9] Mark 11:17.

[10] Matt. 10:5.

Scribes and Pharisees, we need scarcely say, were fully persuaded that in so reconciling passages they were merely recovering the meaning God meant the verses to bear, and they would have rent their robes in horror at the charge that they were reading their own subjective ideas into the holy text. It was all divine and therefore every verse must have a divine meaning; if such a meaning was not clear on the surface it must be discovered somehow. And to hold that any verse was of anything but the purest divine origin was apostasy: "That soul shall be rooted out that says, The whole Torah is from God with the exception of this or that verse, which was spoken not by God but by Moses out of his own mouth." [13] So at least taught the later Rabbis, but the Pharisaic scribes of Jesus' day held assuredly the same doctrine. It resulted, of course, in interpretations that are often models of perversity. When, for instance, a third century Rabbi, Chanina ben Papa, undertook to reconcile the permission of divorce in Deut. 24 with Mal. 2:16, where God says "I hate putting away," he explains that the latter passage refers only to the

---

[11] Acts 7:53, Gal. 3:19, Heb. 2:2.

[12] Apparently, however, it disappears from later Jewish Haggadah; cf. the passages assembled in Strack-Billerbeck on Gal. 3:19. Possibly Christian polemic, as in St. Paul, made such a teaching dangerous.

[13] A baraitha in *Sanh.*, 99a. Cf. other passages in Strack-Billerbeck on Matt. 19:8.

Gentiles; among them divorce is sinful, but the Jews are favored by God above all other nations by being allowed to put away their wives.[14]

This last instance gives us a parallel to Jesus' treatment of the Old Testament in the case of a conflict of verses on precisely the same theme, which likewise involves Deut. 24. In his mind [15] this passage was contrary to Gen. 2:24, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they (twain [16]) shall be one flesh": here is set forth an ideal of marriage whose very essence involves permanency. The permission granted in Deuteronomy is, consequently, a declension from this ideal, a concession made "for the hardness of men's hearts," a regulation of an abuse in order to prevent worse evils. It would be tempting here to understand "(Moses) wrote you this commandment" in the sense "Moses, not God"; if so we should have an explicit violation of the Rabbinic dictum cited above. I believe, however, that this would read modern concepts unduly into the passage, and that to Jesus, as to his contemporaries, "Moses wrote" carried with it the necessary implication "at God's dictation." Otherwise Jesus' enemies would have had a fatal and unambiguous case against him. And we could scarcely fail to find echoes of so radical a doctrine in apostolic teaching, but there is notoriously nothing of the sort; St.

---

[14] Pal. Talmud, *Qiddushin*, 1, 58c; cf. Genesis Rabba, 18; Strack-Billerbeck on Matt. 19:7.

[15] Mark 10:2–9.

[16] So the LXX and Mark 10:8, and perhaps Palestinian Haggadah.

Paul's theory in Gal. 3:19–20 is quite different. We must consequently interpret Mark 10:5 as containing Jesus' conviction that the Law, while all divinely given, contains precepts belonging to two distinct moral levels: one expressive of God's truest will, the other merely making the best that could at the time be made of a corrupt condition of human society. A sort of precedent for such a distinction existed in the recognized fact that the Pentateuchal legislation meant for non-Jews—chiefly the rules for the *gerim* or "sojourners" in Lev. 17–18—was rudimentary compared with the Law binding Israel. To Jesus it was obvious that the higher law should rule.

In this instance we are dealing with an extreme case where Jesus frankly declares an Old Testament law to have an imperfect aim from the start, and there is no exact parallel elsewhere in his teaching. In the Corban episode [17] he dealt with two precepts that were both good in themselves, "Honor thy father and thy mother," [18] and "Ye shall not swear by my name falsely." [19] What should be done when an act demanded by a vow conflicted with duty to parents? The scribes at that day declared that the oath took precedence, but to Jesus the opposite conclusion was axiomatic,—and Rabbinism came in time to agree with him.[20]

On the surface Matt. 5:38–39 and 5:43–44 appear also to be resolutions of legal conflicts, but such was probably not their original purpose. Ex. 21:24, "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth," instructs judges in criminal trials as to the proper sentence to be passed, while Jesus' words, "But I say unto you, Resist not evil," are addressed to would-be plaintiffs in such actions. We may compare Luke 12:13–15, where Jesus refuses to concern himself with the division of an estate, but warns both parties against the covetousness that caused the dispute. In Matt. 5:43 the clause "Thou shalt hate thine enemy" is not an Old Testament citation at all; it reflects the political situation when hatred of Rome had virtually become a test of sound Judaism. Jesus would scarcely have quoted it as a precept if it had not received some scribal support—and some scribal support was inevitable; we remember how in the late war clergymen who should have known better were urging similar maxims as expressing religious duty. But we should record as distinctly as possible that the later Rabbis rejected resolutely any religious justification for hatred in any form.[21]

---

[17] Mark 7:1–23.

[18] Ex. 20:12.

[19] Lev. 19:12.

[20] Cf. above, page 108.

It remains to consider Jesus' attitude toward a different class of precepts, those purely and simply ceremonial. Here, as we have seen, this attitude in practice was normally one of positive acceptance. Yet we must remember that the ceremonies Jesus observed—avoiding prohibited foods, resting on the Sabbath, wearing phylacteries, etc.—were unquestioned practices in the Palestine of his day, far easier to keep than to violate. They were observed by everyone, whether with or without special pretensions to piety, and not even the "publicans and sinners" would omit them altogether. Society was definitely constructed around these observances. Only ritually clean food, for instance, was for sale in the markets, and a Jew desiring to eat anything else would find that gratifying his wish involved considerable trouble. Consequently no one really questioned the utility or obligation of the ritual decrees in the Old Testament—which we must here distinguish very carefully from the scribal expansions.

---

[21] The traces of a contrary attitude in Strack-Billerbeck, i, pp. 365 f., are so insignificant as to be negligible.

Yet the problem was really felt by Jesus, and in attacking it he again had recourse to a doctrine of two levels of legalistic obligation, although not the same two levels as before. "The Sabbath was made for man" is one of the most familiar of his sayings; we must certainly understand this as teaching that God, in instituting the Sabbath, provided its rest for man's benefit, to give the blessings that come from a regular surcease from labor and, presumably, to enable him to find uninterrupted leisure for worship. The Sabbath rest, consequently, was no end in itself: "man was not made for the Sabbath." Now it has often enough been pointed out that Jesus' teaching thus far is paralleled by a second century Rabbinic saying of uncertain authorship,[22] "The Sabbath is delivered to you, not you to the Sabbath." But the conclusion that Jesus draws is one that no second century Rabbi—or first century Pharisaic scribe—could possibly have drawn:

---

[22] Strack-Billerbeck on Mark 2:27.

"Since the Sabbath was made for man
And not man for the Sabbath
Then man is master of the Sabbath." [23]

In other words, each man is by the Law the judge of how far the enjoined Sabbath repose is really conducive to his welfare; and he is empowered by the Law to violate it, if in a concrete instance the "rest" would harm instead of helping him.

That Jesus meant this principle seriously appears from the example given by Mark [24] in immediate conjunction with the saying. David was a recognized model of Old Testament piety, so much so that his normal acts formed a safe precedent for anyone to follow. Now on one occasion David entered the Temple, took the sacred showbread, ate it himself and gave it to his followers—and his action is so unrebuked by the inspired writer of I Samuel that God's approval must certainly be assumed.[25] But why did David perform so apparently sacrilegious an act? For a very simple but all-sufficient reason: he and his companions were hungry; "he had need." In other words: If observing a ceremonial precept should on a given occasion cause human suffering, on that occasion that precept should be disregarded. Nor need the suffering be extreme. David and his men were not starving. The Sabbath healings that Jesus performed could all have been postponed a few hours with but slight inconvenience to the persons relieved. The disciples who plucked grain on the Sabbath were surely not very hungry. So Jesus' doctrine that the Sabbath was made for man was one in which the words "for man" were interpreted very broadly, and "man is the master of the Sabbath" was meant in a very inclusive sense.

---

[23] The only possible sense of Mark 2:27–28, where—just as, *e. g.*, in Psalm 8:4—"son of man" is a mere repetition of "man" in poetic parallelism. When Luke 6:5 and Matt. 12:8 took "son of man" to mean "Christ," the first part of the saying lost its meaning and had to be omitted.

[24] 2:25–26.

[25] The Jewish exegetes agreed that David's act was sinless; see below.

It is from the same principle, then, that we must interpret his acceptance of the food-laws: they were rules given by God to insure His people's prosperity. The dictum, "There is nothing from without the man that going into him can defile him," [26] shows that Jesus did not seek for any profound religious motive in the regulations, and that to him they must have been more or less rules of hygiene. We may compare IV Maccabees 5:25–26: "We eat no unclean meat; for believing our Law to be given by God, we know also that the Creator of the world, as a Lawgiver, feels for us according to our nature. He has commanded us to eat the things that will be suitable for our lives,[27] and has forbidden us to eat meats that would be contrary." Evidently, then, Jesus would have held that in case of conflict with a higher human good the food laws must give way at least as readily as the Sabbath law.

---

[26] Mark 7:15.

[27] "souls"?

We are now in a position to understand the sense in which Jesus said that the whole Law "hangs" [28] on the two Old Testament verses Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The Law had as its purpose the total good of God's people, and in promoting this good all God's people should share. Primarily of course their spiritual good, but, as Jesus' treatment of the Sabbath law shows, physical good was just as truly in God's plan. Under normal conditions the separate precepts all contributed to the general end, but under exceptional circumstances the final purpose of the legislation must override individual precepts. Such exceptional circumstances, moreover, could occur very commonly and might be nothing more urgent than a hungry man's desire to pluck and eat grain on the Sabbath. While, then, in a sense the whole Old Testament was divine, its divinity shone forth with unimpaired lustre only in such passages as touched the highest spiritual levels; these and only these were of unconditional obligation.

We are frequently reminded nowadays that Jesus' estimate of the purpose of the Law was shared explicitly by the scribes. In St. Luke, in fact, the "summary" is not enunciated by Jesus but by one of the lawyers,[29] while in Mark 12:28–34 a scribe endorses the summary so enthusiastically that Jesus says to him "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." And we remember of course the still earlier saying of Hillel, "What is unpleasing to thee, do not to thy neighbor: this is the whole Torah; all else is commentary." [30] So Mr. Herford takes Jesus to task for ignorance of Pharisaic doctrine; he "commended one Scribe for saying only what any Scribe would have assented to." [31] And, we may believe, assent in Pharisaic circles would have been very wide.

---

[28] Matt. 22:40. The phrasing may be that of the Evangelist, but it expresses Jesus' attitude exactly.

Assent in general principle, however, is by no means the question. The real problem was the application of the general principle when laws conflicted, and it was here that Jesus and the Pharisees clashed. The difference finds its perfect expression in a saying of no less a Rabbi than the great Jochanan ben Zakkai who declared: "Death does not defile, nor does water cleanse," [32] a saying that reminds us irresistibly of Jesus' pronouncement that food cannot make unclean. But while Jesus was content to emphasize his saying by repeating it in the positive form, "the things that proceed out of the mouth are those that defile a man," R. Jochanan felt obliged to continue: "(Obedience to the rule for clean and unclean is necessary) because it is an ordinance of the King of kings; God has said: I have made a statute, I have commanded an ordinance; no man is justified to transgress my ordinance, for it is written, This is the statute of the law which the Lord has commanded."[33] In other words: "We must obey the law of cleanness solely because it is commanded, and even though we know that 'clean' and 'unclean' do not really mean anything."

---

[29] Luke 10:27.

[30] *Shab.* 31a.

[31] *The Pharisees*, p. 208.

[32] *Pesiq.* 40b and elsewhere; cf. Strack-Billerbeck on Matt. 15:11.

As R. Jochanan belongs to the middle of the first century—he died *ca.* 80 A. D.—it is, I think, really probable that his phrasing is definitely directed against Jewish-Christian contentions based on Jesus' teaching. The Christian Jews would argue that, since "common" food or the touch of a dead body did not actually defile, violation of the precepts forbidding such things was permissible in case of moderate need. R. Jochanan admits the premises, but passionately denies the conclusion. The laws of God are not binding because of a higher principle contained in them; they are binding *because they are the laws of God.* They demand obedience, consequently, by the sole fact of their existence, and attempts to set them casually aside by an appeal to their eventual purpose is nothing less than open rebellion against God. So obedience for obedience' own sake is one of the very greatest Rabbinical virtues.

Hence any general agreement in general principle that may have existed between Jesus and his opponents vanishes the moment we leave the realm of generalities. When a scribe used Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18 as a "summary" of the Law, he meant no more than that love of God and love of man might somehow be taken on faith as the eventual purpose of every precept. But attempts to detect this purpose in individual precepts—attempts of which the Rabbis were very fond—were really beside the mark, while under no circumstances must such attempts be used to criticize the precepts themselves. The Sabbath law, consequently, might be violated solely under the gravest compulsion—usually only if actual danger of death existed. Hence David's eating the showbread constituted an almost insoluble problem, over which learned Rabbis tied themselves into complicated exegetical knots; it was explained, for instance, that this particular showbread had not yet been laid on the table and therefore lacked full consecration.[34] Jesus' simple explanation, "He had need," did not and could not occur to the Pharisaically trained mind.

---

[33] Num. 19:2.

So we may summarize by saying that in Rabbinic hands the "summary" of the law was a mere bit of academic piety; in Jesus' hands it was a practical tool by which a man might determine his duty.

I believe it wholly possible that the verse, "Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass away from the Law"[35] is a genuine saying of Jesus. But he said it in a sense peculiarly his own, viewing the Law as an organic whole, in which all parts were visibly subordinated to the ultimate principle of love. In such a scheme the jots and tittles had their appropriate niches, and, under normal Jewish circumstances, their value. But when exceptional conditions arose, the Law itself, by virtue of its final purpose, actually commanded men to brush impeding jots and tittles relentlessly aside.

---

[34] Cf. the long list of Rabbinical passages in Strack-Billerbeck on Matt. 12:3.

[35] Matt. 5:18 = Luke 16:17.

This principle, it appears, raised no acute problems of practice during Jesus' lifetime and in the earliest ages of Jewish Christianity. But with the first step on Gentile soil questions came thronging thick and fast. How far is it right to require Gentile converts to buy all their food in Jewish markets? How far is it right to compel them to observe the Sabbath in a society totally unarranged for such observance? And, supremely important, how far is it right to force them to submit to circumcision? St. Paul gathered up all these questions into one, however, when he asked, "Do Christians actually have anything to do with law *as law?*" Now it is remarkable enough that a first generation Jewish Christian could be found to ask so shattering a question. But that is not the real wonder of the situation. What is most astonishing of all is that St. Paul could have won the older apostles over to some kind of acquiescence in his position, sufficient to let them give him the right hand of fellowship, and sufficient to enable him in his rebuke of Peter to assume that enough common ground existed to win the latter to his way of thinking.[36] Now it would be difficult to believe that this common ground was won exclusively by the technicalities of Pauline logic, nor is there any need so to suppose. The real reason is before us: Jesus' teaching that all details of the Law are subordinate to love leads inevitably to the final conclusion: The Law is no longer to be viewed as a body of obligatory laws. The saying in Romans 13:8–10, "He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the Law. For, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, Namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; love therefore is the fulfilment of the Law," is typically Pauline, but it is also the doctrine of Jesus identically. And the same is true of Romans 14:14, "I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself," which is a mere rewording of Mark 7:15, and, I believe, was meant by St. Paul as a quotation from the words of the earthly Jesus.

The other apostles may very well have thought that St. Paul pushed his conclusions unduly far, that there was no real necessity for the total discarding of Jewish customs by Gentile converts, that Jewish Christianity nourished a higher spiritual life than was possible in Gentile Christianity. Such is the contention of, say, the First Gospel. But with the central principle of this Pauline non-legalism they could not quarrel, for this central principle had been taught them by Jesus, and they themselves were busy teaching it to their converts. And so they accepted the Gentiles as true members of the brotherhood, joy at their conversion more than outweighing regret at the abandonment of the traditional ceremonies. Such is again the contention of, say, the First Gospel. In this way Jesus' doctrine of the Jewish Law carried his disciples irresistibly to a final universalism.

---

[36] Gal. 2:9, 14.

As Dr. Klausner puts it: "In spite of the fact that (Jesus) himself was undoubtedly a 'nationalist' Jew by instinct and even an extreme nationalist . . . there was in him something out of which arose 'non-Judaism.' "[37] "From among the overwhelming mass accumulated by the Scribes and Pharisees Jesus sought out for himself the 'one pearl.' . . . In the self-same moment he both annulled *Judaism* as the *life-force* of the Jewish nation, and also the nation itself as a nation. For a religion which possesses only a certain conception of God and a morality acceptable to *all* mankind, does not belong to any special nation, and, consciously or unconsciously, breaks down the barriers of nationality."[38]

* * *

Our investigation of Jesus' estimate of the Old Testament has been lengthy, but it has taught us more than we have won from the concrete points at issue. For we have learned the sense in which Jesus cited the precepts given by God to Moses; we have learned also the sense in which Jesus gave his own precepts. No more than the Old Testament commandments are his own words "laws," demanding literal obedience simply because they proceed from a supreme legislator. Behind and above them all lies the ultimate duty of love, and separate precepts are obligatory under concrete circumstances when—but only when—*in those circumstances* they express this duty.

---

[37] *Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 413.

[38] p. 390. To Dr. Klausner, as a zealous Jewish nationalist, Jesus' universalism is a matter for regret; Christians, of course, must judge differently.

When we have seen this, we have clarified once and for all countless traditional difficulties that have entangled themselves around Jesus' sayings. From the very beginning the natural tendency was to treat them legalistically. In our First Gospel, for instance, it is clear that the Evangelist meant the Sermon on the Mount to be read as a code, paralleling the law of Sinai. Even St. Paul, in fact, in I Cor. 7:10 uses Jesus' prohibition of divorce as a strict law, which by the mere fact of its existence admits of no further discussion: "Unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord!"[39] On the later elaboration of the legalistic principle we need not here enlarge; it has been a perpetual factor in ecclesiastical dissension. It has been used by many earnest souls in support of ultra-rigoristic systems; on the other hand in recent years it has been used—quite sincerely—to discredit Jesus and his teaching. I have actually heard it argued that Jesus' words, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret,"[40] show that he regarded any corporate or public worship as sinful. Such is, indeed, the logical result of the legalistic method, surely sufficient by itself to show how thoroughly wrong the method is.

---

[39] Although, as a matter of fact, St. Paul by using the higher principle, "God has called us in peace" (verse 15), does qualify the law by admitting divorce when a convert is deserted by a heathen partner. Just so the famous "exceptional clause" in Matt. 5:32 and 19:9 introduces a similar mitigation.

To make the problem concrete let us take a celebrated saying that has become a bone of fierce contention, Matt. 5:39: "But I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to carry a burden a mile, go with him twain." Probably most moderns read this saying in the light of Prov. 25:21–22 as used by St. Paul in Romans 12:20, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head," so gaining the sense, "Gentleness succeeds in the long run better than force, for it converts the adversary into a friend." I thoroughly believe that—in the long run—this is profoundly true, and I hope from the bottom of my heart that it will be more and more accepted as an instrument of international statecraft. But it is not taught by Jesus. St. Paul gives us a motive based on benefiting the enemy, but Jesus does nothing of the sort: he gives us no motive beyond that of the saying itself, which concerns itself with nothing except the individual addressed. Since love is *my* paramount duty, *I* must practice love under even the most trying circumstances. *I* must turn the other cheek, surrender my coat, or bear the burden the second mile; as far as *I* am concerned, any resentment that would make *me* do otherwise is a sin. My primary concern is with my own motives and acts, and so my primal duty is to rid those motives and acts of selfishness.

---

[40] Matt. 6:6.

Now when this much has become clear to me—but only when this much has become clear to me—it will be my task to analyse (say) turning the other cheek as an act that involves *two* persons. If I do turn the cheek, I can be reasonably certain that I am guarding my own conscience. But I am to love my neighbor for *his* sake, not for my own, and so I must do *him* all the good in my power: will good to him be in every concrete case the result of turning the cheek? The writer of Proverbs and St. Paul assure me that it will—but *will* it? Jesus gives me no such assurance; he leaves me to solve that problem for myself. And I know perfectly well that cases regularly arise when turning the other cheek will do actual harm to the smiter. If, for instance, he is an impertinent and rowdy small boy, obsessed for the moment with a spirit of blind cruelty, the most loving act I can perform for him may be a sound thrashing conscientiously administered. To argue otherwise would be to revert to the precept in place of the ultimate principle, and in the name of love to work permanent injury.

But in most cases love due the opponent does not exhaust the problem, and still other persons must be taken into consideration. We have it succinctly put in the familiar question,[41] "What would Jesus have wished the good Samaritan to do, if he had arrived fifteen minutes sooner, while the robbers were still beating their victim?" I cannot see how there can be any possible hesitation. The bandits are not the crucial figures of the scene, nor was the Samaritan's duty of love to them alone; he owed love just as truly to the hapless wayfarer —and to future travellers who might come that way. Isolating the wrong-doer as if he were the only person worthy of our attention has been responsible for an endless amount of confused and oversentimental thinking. Jesus did not say, "If a man take the widow's cloak, let him take the orphan's coat also." To be sure, cases rarely arose in his ministry when an act overruling the precept of gentleness was called for by the higher principle of love, and yet on one occasion such an act was demanded imperiously and was forthcoming. In the Temple market the worship of God was commercialized and discredited, while the poor were robbed right and left. To plead that Jesus should have made an affectionate appeal to the traders' better nature would be to make oneself ridiculous —and Jesus never made himself ridiculous. He did the only possible thing consistent with his teaching; "he overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold the doves." [42] The love of our neighbor that Jesus commanded may be something that leads us, like him, into actual battle for the poor and helpless.

---

[41] Due ultimately, I believe, to H. L. Martensen.

Now I know perfectly well how easily all this may be abused, how facile it is to dress up selfishness in the garb of broad social well-doing, and with Mr. Chadband to say with a cunning eye, "Let us then, my brother, in the spirit of love proceed untoe it." The answer is very simple. While the higher principle may at times override the precepts, the burden to prove that it does override is on us, and we must undertake the proof with full consciousness of our responsibility. The sayings are means by which we may search our souls to the very bottom for hidden selfishness. They make clear to us as nothing else can the supreme demand of the commandment to love our neighbor as ourself; a command that warns us that anger in thought is just as truly wrong as anger in act, that the impure look may be as genuinely sinful as impurity consummated, that falseness in our lightest word is so serious a matter that we should rigorously avoid adjurations, since their use tends to weaken our sense of responsibility when they are not employed. When we have made real progress here, it will be time to talk of discarding precepts for the sake of a higher principle.

---

[42] Mark 11:15.

Confusion as to our duty will arise at times, but not as often as we may think. As Dr. Bultmann has well put it: "I am not obliged to ask what I must actually do in order to love. Who so asks has evidently not understood what it means to love his neighbor as himself; for what it means to love himself he knows very well, and without any theory or system about self. For self love is not a principle of morals—but the attitude of the natural man. So if a man is to love his neighbor as himself, he obviously knows in the concrete situation the proper direction of his act."[43] We shall, no doubt, encounter here and there cases of real perplexity, and we must school ourselves to choose intelligently. We may gain help from others; especially, perhaps, from the fruits of past Christian experience as embodied in works on Christian ethics, moral theology, and—in the right sense of the word—casuistry. But Jesus puts the final responsibility on us. There is no other way.

---

[43] *Jesus*, pp. 106 f. (1926).

VI. JESUS AND THE FATHER

INTO WIDER applications of Jesus' ethics, ethos, or whatever we choose to call it,[1] it is needless for us to enter here. It is generally recognized to-day —and it ought to be universally recognized—that what is termed the "social gospel" has only an indirect connection with Jesus' teaching. In social organization and political problems he took no interest. In no sense did he feel himself to be a judge or divider over his nation's temporal affairs,[2] and, as far as foreign oppression was concerned, he was content to render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's.[3] His own concern was elsewhere. When, for instance, we read: "He expected by his teachings, life and death to release in the spirits of men and human institutions social forces which God could use to transform the world into a place more in accord with his will,"[4] we are reading a statement in which admirable practical exposition has usurped the place of historical exegesis. The Kingdom of God that Jesus preached and expected is purely transcendental, and its full descent into the present æon would mean not the transformation but the wreck of all that man calls "the world";

---

[1] On the terminology dispute see, *e. g.*, Windisch, *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt*, pp. 29, 35, etc. (Leipsic, 1929).

[2] Luke 12: 14.

[3] Mark 12: 17.

[4] C. C. McCown, *The Genesis of the Social Gospel*, 1929, p. 370.

the beginning of a new age wholly discontinuous with social evolution.

Jesus' primary task, then, was the awakening of individual consciences, in order to prepare men one by one to face the judgment that would inaugurate the Kingdom. No doubt in so doing he aroused a new social conscience, but it was of a very specialized type. From the first his followers must have been conscious of an extraordinarily close mutual relation and of corresponding social duties to each other, but this group self-consciousness was almost anything rather than a social self-consciousness in the modern sense. If we bear this in mind, we shall save ourselves from misapprehensions too frequently found on the historical pages of "Christian sociologies."

The most that we can say is that our duty to love our neighbor as ourselves carries with it a duty to see, as far as we may, that his environment is adapted to his highest capacities of development. This may very well involve a duty to aid in the reform of corrupt social, political or economic systems, for nowadays even private individuals may have influence in such matters. But the complexity of such problems is so enormous that cases will be very few when we dare say that one solution and only one is Christian; we may even wonder if the case can ever arise when we must say that a given solution is so un-Christian that no follower of Christ can possibly adopt it. If all men's consciences were perfectly converted to love of the neighbor, then social, political and economic difficulties would adjust themselves automatically; this is a truism. But what grounds have we to expect that this earth will ever be inhabited by so altruistic a human race? I fear that a widespread looking forward to this blessed state is an uncritical survival of the Victorian tenet that change necessarily means progress, and that progress must necessarily be always toward the better. Perhaps we may indeed some day reach such an Utopia; I do not know. What I do know is that it, if ever achieved, would fall infinitely short of Jesus' picture of the Kingdom of God. It would omit the most essential of all of Jesus' terms, namely, "God."

Returning now to Jesus' ethic, as far as he gives any reason for the categorical command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," it is based on the nature of God. "Ye shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."[5] Or still more clearly: "Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust."[6]

The meaning of this last saying is unmistakable: sonship depends on likeness of character. We may, indeed, dispute about the correct translation of the verb before "sons." Should we render it "become," with the thought that each step forward in the exercise of love means an increased likeness to God, and so an increase in sonship? Or should we take it as "be" with a futuristic force, understanding "that ye may be sons" as a reward bestowed at the last day? We find, in fact, this latter force of "sons of God" in Luke 20:36: "they are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection." Many contemporary commentators insist on this sense, often with an explicit avowal of a dread lest we attribute to Jesus anything like the ethic taught in "idealistic" systems. I sympathize with this fear, but I cannot see that the two interpretations above are mutually exclusive. Undoubtedly there is in Jesus' teaching no continuity of social order between this age and the Kingdom. But this is by no means to assert that there is in his teaching no continuity of character in individuals between their present life and their life in the world to come: our final "being" sons of God at the end depends inextricably on our "becoming" sons of God in daily life.

---

[5] Matt. 5:48.

[6] Matt. 5:44–45.

In other words, then, the essence of Jesus' ethic is imitation of God.[7] To many modern objectors—above all, the Barthians—this doctrine is almost horrifying, but I am afraid I must insist that it is Jesus who is responsible for the phrase, not I. We are to love our enemies *because* God sends his rain on the unjust; we to be perfect *because* God is perfect. So, unless we admit that something of the character—I do not know what other word I can use—unless we admit that something of the *character* of God can really be known, and unless we admit that God's character can in some sense serve as the ideal and model of our own, we may as well give up attempting an obedient following of the ethic of Jesus.

---

[7] A teaching with many Rabbinic parallels, frequently of great beauty. Compare Strack-Billerbeck on Matt. 5:45.

Once we have seen all this, the old controversy as to whether the highest Christian achievement is doing positive good or is abstention from evil is settled at once. The aspect of the Father that Jesus taught is never His infinite purity and holiness,[8] but is always that of the Divine activity. It is in this sense that Jesus feels the title "good" inappropriate even for himself,[9] for only perfect activity can be perfectly good; human activity, however pure, is always limited and therefore imperfect.

Yet God's activity is not simply benevolent, as Jesus knew perfectly well. There are constant acts of His very different from making the blessed sun to rise and sending the kindly rain. Here we raise the problem of evil.

To Jesus, as to the rest of Israel, moral evil is nothing else than rebellion against the will of God, and he neither made nor thought needful any attempt further to analyze its nature. On its origin he was equally silent, for the all but universal demonology, in whose terms he also taught, only transfers the problem farther back. So Jesus was content with the religious fact of a practical dualism, permitted by a God who could abolish it at any moment, and who would, in fact, very soon abolish it forever at the coming of the Kingdom. Why God so permits moral evil is a further problem on which Jesus said nothing at all. But since the power of free moral choice on the part of all created beings, human or superhuman, was axiomatic to him, the necessity of this free will might have been his starting point, if he had ever discussed the question. However, he never did discuss the question: moral evil exists, its very nature is rebellion against God, and therefore God's anger against it is inevitable. Our prayer must be "Lead us not into temptation"; we must keep as far away from evil as possible.

---

[8] Even in Matt. 5:48 the "perfection" of God is an active virtue, as Luke shows by using "merciful" instead of "perfect."

[9] Mark 10:18.

Physical evil—sickness, pain and death—was an equally obvious fact, but its origin lies equally outside the circle of Jesus' interests. Very probably he never questioned the primary connection made in Genesis between physical and moral evil, but he himself does not make such a connection explicitly. The only possible exception is the scene in Mark 2:1–12, where absolution is pronounced before a cure, but the pre-Synoptic tradition—aided perhaps by the Evangelist—has not transmitted this scene in its original form. Moreover, if the sequence of absolution and cure is really primary, it does not follow that in Jesus' mind this sequence was one of cause and effect; in no other healing is absolution ever pronounced. We may naturally take for granted that Jesus, like everybody else, knew that misbehavior may shorten life, but for that matter an heroic following of God's will may lead to premature death just as surely; it was so in Jesus' own case. In Luke 13:1–5 he vehemently denies the theory that the Galileans whom Pilate slaughtered or the eighteen on whom the Siloam tower fell were greater sinners than the rest of the Jews, and, while he warns the whole nation that they are in danger of a similar fate, this fate is to come upon them as an apocalyptic judgment, not —to use modern terms—as the result of laws operative in the present order.

That physical suffering is rigorously under God's control is, however, part of Jesus' explicit teaching: not one sparrow can fall to the ground without the Father's permission.[10] Yet the Father gives his permission so often as to make suffering a commonplace, as dead sparrows for sale for a trifle in every market testify. Why? St. Paul writes of the spiritual strength to be gained triumphantly through tribulation,[11] the author of Hebrews enlarges more prosaically on the chastening effect of trials.[12] Both explanations have value, but neither of them covers the whole problem; neither of them, for instance, explains why sparrows suffer. Jesus gives no general explanation, but deals with suffering simply as a fact of the world as it is.

---

[10] Matt. 10:29 = Luke 12:6.

[11] Romans 5:3–5, etc.

[12] Heb. 12:7–11.

Often it is remediable, and normally we are bound to relieve distress, if we can. But in other cases it may likewise be our duty to welcome distress for ourselves—and, it may well be, for others also. When such is the case, however, a reason for the suffering may sometimes be glimpsed. The martyr in II Maccabees 7:37 f. asserted to the tyrant: "I give up both body and life for the laws of our fathers, calling upon God that he may speedily become gracious to the nation; and that thou amidst trials and plagues mayest confess that he alone is God; and that in me and my brethren thou mayest stay the wrath of the Almighty, which hath justly been brought upon our whole race." Similarly, although with infinitely less crudity, Jesus at the Last Supper declared his blood to be "poured out for many";[13] somehow the suffering of a righteous man will avail for the good of others.[14] Once more no theory is given; the fact is left to speak for itself.

Of one thing, however, Jesus was perfectly certain. Whatever mysterious ends moral and physical evil may serve, they are only temporary for all who accept God's will. To him the proof of this lies in the ultimate fact of the universe: the nature of God Himself. It was this that to Jesus made Ex. 3:6 the impregnable proof of the resurrection.[15] Since God proclaimed Himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the resurrection of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob cannot for a moment be doubted; a being who would allow the destruction of the trusting objects of his love would not be God. Here we reach the centre of Jesus' message.

---

[13] Mark 14:24.
[14] Compare Mark 10:45.
[15] Mark 12:26 f.

Here, too, we reach a conviction that lies in a realm beyond the reach of the historian, the realm of religious experience and religious assent. To accept on Jesus' assurance that such is truly the nature of God is to accept Christianity. And to hold to this assurance through and in spite of all difficulties raised by moral and physical evil is what we call Christian faith. It may be, indeed, that some of these difficulties can be solved in our own experience. And we can often see real reason in the explanations of evil so liberally to be read in countless books and to be heard from countless teachers. But we must be on our guard against committing ourselves wholly to such explanations, for times may well arise when the best of them may fail us. *Jesus did not give them.* And we may well believe that he did not give them because he knew how inadequate they may be; how to every one of us times will come when we must pray blindly: "Father, all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me: howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt." [16]

The God whom Jesus preached, then, is a God who wills good for all men, and who invincibly performs final good for all whom He accepts. But whom does He accept? What is Jesus' doctrine of salvation?

---

[16] Mark 14:36.

The Jewish doctrine of that age—and of any other age—set forth that he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him, that he who does God's will by fulfilling His commandments will certainly be saved. And the Jewish doctrine of that age—and of any other age—set forth equally that a past evil life forms no barrier to acceptance, if repentance and reformation are made effective:[17] "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive."[18] So far there was complete agreement. But, unfortunately, this agreement was on an entirely academic question: the real problem lies in the fact that the wicked man never does turn completely away from his sin, nor does he ever continue to do nothing save that which is lawful and right. Some fail by what is, humanly speaking, a small margin, but with most of us the margin is alarmingly great. What then?

In the Judaism of Jesus' day no single answer had as yet been discovered to the problem. That the sinner could win pardon merely by offering appropriate sacrifices was a thoroughly discredited doctrine, believed only by Jews on the very lowest religious plane. On an almost equally debased level were those who said to themselves, "We are children of Abraham—and *therefore* assured of God's favor, no matter what we may do"; no one of any spiritual intelligence held this theory. More general was a belief that membership in Israel confers at least so much of God's favor as to make the same sin less heinous in a Jew than in a Gentile, thus making Jewish repentance and amendment comparatively easy. So the writer of Wisdom, pluming himself on Israel's rejection of idolatry, blandly declares, "For even if we sin, we are thine, knowing thy dominion."[19] In some form or other this theory was very widespread,[20] and, indeed, was difficult to separate from the fundamental Jewish conviction that God's choice of Israel gives her a Divine prerogative.[21] But where Jews were living chiefly among other Jews, the morally earnest could not content themselves with so easy-going a doctrine, and St. Paul's "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first and also of the Gentile,"[22] must have had many Palestinian parallels as passionate as the preaching of the apostle himself. Pharisaism in its essence is nothing else; the Pharisaic "rule" was adopted as a protest against the laxity of the nation, and it laid all emphasis on the need of positive achievement within the ranks of Israel. And, by Jesus' day, this emphasis—which is not exclusively Pharisaic—had become fairly normative in Palestine.

---

[17] Elaborate citations in Strack-Billerbeck on Matt. 4:17.

[18] Ezek. 18:27.

---

[19] Wisdom 15:2.

[20] Compare the elaborate citations in Strack-Billerbeck on Romans 2:11.

[21] In more spiritual circles this prerogative was explained as a moral superiority due to the nation-wide knowledge of God's revelation.

[22] Romans 2:9.

Exactly what the Pharisees themselves taught in this regard we cannot of course now recover—for one important reason because the Pharisees made no attempt to reach a precise formulation, but held their opinion chiefly as a group "ethos." In practice, however, their theory worked out in teaching that salvation can be expected only by those who have fulfilled God's Law with *substantial* completeness.[23] About the exact force to be attached to "substantial completeness" there naturally were differences of opinion. Extreme rigorists like St. Paul, who insisted the completeness should be virtually perfect, could not have been numerous, although they existed: to the writer of II Esdras, for instance, the final number of the saved would be pitifully small.[24] But even the more liberal Pharisees, we may be sure, demanded a decided proportion of good works over evil; the easy-going days of Akiba and his "51%" theory[25] were still in the future. Every Pharisee, moreover—let us be perfectly clear about this—would teach that no preponderance of good, no matter how great, could of itself wipe out evil; even the slightest sin would prevent salvation unless forgiven by the mercy of God. So we might formulate the doctrine thus: We are saved by God's love and mercy extended to us. But only those who have proved their worthiness by a genuine measure of positive achievement—or are resolved and prepared to make such achievement—are justified in hoping that this love and mercy will be theirs.[26]

---

[23] Compare page 100 f.

[24] II Esdras 8:2–3, etc.

[25] Compare page 101.

How does Jesus' doctrine of salvation compare with this?

If we confine ourselves to the Sermon on the Mount, we seem to find him teaching almost exactly the same. The definition of righteousness is, no doubt, very different, but for present purposes this is immaterial. All emphasis is laid on moral accomplishment: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."[27] "If thy right eye cause thee to stumble, pluck it out and cast it from thee."[28] "Ye shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."[29] "By their fruits ye shall know them."[30] "And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof."[31]

The ideal set forth here is an ideal of accomplishment: nothing less. Whether or not it lies in human nature to rise to such heroic moral heights is a question not asked; as Dr. Windisch puts it: "Whoever hears and reads the Sermon on the Mount may be terrified, but, if he has understood it rightly, he has learned what he must *do* in order that he may be saved. The problem of human ability, as it is expounded in Pauline and ecclesiastical theology and which is solved by the dogma of man's impotence and God's grace, this problem is as alien to the Sermon on the Mount as it is to the Law. Since God has so determined, and since entering into the Kingdom of Heaven depends on fulfilment, it is obvious that man 'can' obey."[32]

---

[26] For the Rabbinic teaching as to the need of amendment after repentance see Strack-Billerbeck, v. 1, pp. 170–172.

[27] Matt. 5:20.

[28] Matt. 5:29.

[29] Matt. 5:48.

[30] Matt. 7:20.

[31] Matt. 7:26–27.

As a statement of the doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount this summary is substantially exact; we need only note—as Dr. Windisch himself notes—that the Beatitudes and the petition for forgiveness in the Lord's Prayer are different. But Dr. Windisch proceeds to argue that this rigoristic doctrine is representative of Jesus' teaching as a whole. Jesus knew that his demands were difficult, but this made no difference. He knew that very few could succeed in even a reasonably satisfactory obedience, but this made no difference. Many are called but few are chosen, and few there are indeed who find the narrow path leading into life.

We may call this picture hard and repellent, but that does not dismiss it as unhistoric; the facts exist in the primary tradition, and have been a constant source of perplexity throughout the whole history of Christianity. They serve as the fundaments of the drastic doctrine of men like Tolstoi or the leaders of rigoristic religious orders. On the Catholic side, consequently, there has been some disposition to treat the Sermon on the Mount as not meant for the rank and file of Christians, but only for those undertaking the life of "perfection"; this is of course quite impossible historically. In practice the usual appeal is from "Jesus" to "Christ"; from the historic teacher to the exalted Head of a Church that sets forth an elaborated soteriology; in evangelical circles this appeal is normally to St. Paul. But, no matter how consoling such an appeal may be to faith, it has no value to the historian; to him, if there is to be any appeal, it can only be from Jesus to Jesus; from the Jesus of the Sermon on the Mount to the Jesus as presented elsewhere in the primary sources. Can such an appeal be made?

---

[32] *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt*, pp. 69–70.

In the first place, we must remember that what we call the Sermon on the Mount is not and does not profess to be a compendium of Jesus' complete message. It is a summary of what he taught as to the correct fulfilment of the Law; a summary originally drawn up for the use of Palestinian Christians, to guide them as to their conduct as members of the "Way." The First Evangelist was appalled by what he—no doubt too pessimistically—felt to be the laxity of a time when iniquity was multiplied and the love of the many was waxing cold;[33] he therefore, presumably, would have judged harshly individual failures to achieve notable success in obeying the Sermon's directions. His attitude, however, is not important to us here; it is with the attitude of Jesus that we are concerned.

---

[33] Matt. 24: 12.

We have been warned often and justly enough[34] that Jesus' teaching as to God's acceptance of the penitent does not of itself prove gentleness in Jesus' demands. The Pharisees, too, spoke generously of God's willingness to pardon past sins: the real point at issue is the extent of moral amendment expected after repentance is accepted. And to learn Jesus' attitude in this regard we must look primarily to his practice. Here the tradition is perfectly clear; "the common people heard him gladly,"[35] "he ate and drank with publicans and sinners,"[36] he assured his adversaries that "the publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you."[37] Or, as Mr. Herford puts it: "His sympathies, and his affinities, were with the multitude who were outside the Pharisaic circle, the Am-ha-aretz class, if that term may be taken in a very wide sense."[38]

Now, whatever special virtues members of this class may have had, of one thing we may be perfectly certain: publicans, harlots and other "sinners" were not turned into models of virtue by any single act of repentance; their moral reform could follow their religious conversion only step by step and very slowly. When Jesus surrounded himself by men and women like these, he did not and could not expect to dismiss them as unworthy the moment they showed their inability to live up to the ideals he preached. He must have expected—he *could* only have expected—to train them very gradually indeed, knowing that constant lapses on their part were inevitable. The familiar pictures in Mark of Jesus wrestling with Twelve who constantly fell short of his demands rest on solid fact. The Twelve, moreover, represented the followers whom Jesus deemed exceptionally worthy of his care; where they were weak, less favored disciples must on occasion have seemed entirely hopeless. Yet Jesus could say of them, "Behold my mother and my brethren!"[39] Consequently, while the demands of the Sermon on the Mount are closely bound up with Jesus' doctrine of salvation, the Sermon on the Mount does not contain Jesus' doctrine of salvation. For this we must look elsewhere.

---

[34] *E. g.*, by Dr. Windisch, *op. cit.*, pp. 81–82.

[35] Mark 12:37.

[36] Mark 2:16.

[37] Matt. 21:31.

[38] *The Pharisees*, p. 206.

It is developed most simply in the familiar "parable" of the Pharisee and the publican,[40] where the Pharisee, boasting of his—perfectly veracious—religious achievements, is rejected, while the publican, who prays only for mercy, is accepted. And it is not until we can set this parable alongside of the Sermon on the Mount and understand them simultaneously that we can really claim to understand the teaching of Jesus. The problem is so far from difficult that I am inclined to think that hesitation is due to overfamiliarity with the right answer: the correct solution has been so overloaded with theological and sentimental terminology that investigators have instinctively looked elsewhere.

---

[39] Mark 3:34.

[40] Luke 18:10–14.

The parable teaches unambiguously that the humble soul, conscious of its sin, and faithfully—even hopelessly—making confession to God, receives immediate pardon. And this pardon is granted because of the humble confession and nothing else; certainly not because of any extreme moral transformation that is to follow the confession. This is indicated quite sufficiently by the choice of a publican as the penitent, a person whom no one could expect in the immediate future to do much more than abandon his grosser misdeeds. And this parable confirms precisely Jesus' own practice in selecting as disciples those who appear around him in the tradition.

So our starting point is Jesus' teaching that God is willing to welcome a penitent sinner *despite incompleteness of amendment.* One function of Jesus' moral demands, accordingly, is determined by this phrase "penitent sinner": such a man must know that he has sinned; he must possess a standard of conduct from which he is aware of his shortcomings. It was the fault of the Pharisee in the parable that he possessed a false standard. By interpretative restrictions the Pharisees had actually succeeded in bringing God's moral law within the reach of at least some persons. By measuring the guilt of murder by the measure of earthly punishment for murder—and so reducing proportionately the guilt attaching to lesser forms of anger—by casuistic distinctions which made only technically phrased oaths binding, by limiting the commanded love of the neighbor to love of a small and sympathetic class, etc., certain individuals might actually claim to have fulfilled the law completely; indeed, they could claim to have gone beyond it into works of pure supererogation, such as uncommanded tithing and voluntary fasts. Acceptance of utterly unrestricted demands, such as Jesus set forth, would have wrecked such complacency, and would have brought the Pharisee, equally with the publican, to the piteous outcry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!"[41]

It is from this standpoint primarily that we are to understand "For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way that leadeth into life, and few there are that find it."[42] This is not a universal truth, "The road to salvation must always be only for a very few rare souls." The verbs are meant as true presents, describing actual conditions when the words were spoken: "There are very few who now know how to make the attempt." The scribes by their officially promulgated mutilations of the law had truly taken away the key of knowledge, not entering in themselves and hindering others who were attempting an entrance.[43] With a perverted ethic no one can hope to reach God.

---

[41] That the Pharisees joined in elaborate and detailed Synagogue acknowledgments of sin is not to the point. Regular recitation of liturgical confessions and a genuine sense of personal unworthiness may be miles apart.

[42] Matt. 7:14.

Once, however, the ethic is clarified, once the nature of righteousness is really understood and accepted, then the task is not overwhelmingly difficult. It is still, to be sure, not easy. The ideal of righteousness must really be embraced with undivided desire, without compromise, for no one can serve two masters. But given the humble desire and the faithful effort, there need be no despair because progress is slow. God will meet the soul far more than halfway.

This last teaching—which is that of the three famous parables in Luke 15—has no Rabbinic parallels. To quote Dr. Montefiore: "The virtues of repentance are gloriously praised in the Rabbinic literature, but this direct search for, and appeal to, the sinner, are new and moving notes of high import and significance. The good shepherd who searches for the lost sheep, and reclaims it and rejoices over it, is a new figure, which has never ceased to play its great part in the moral and religious development of the world."[44] With the Rabbis, God, although ready to welcome the penitent, waits for the sinner to come to him; in Jesus' teaching it is God who goes out to seek. There is here a very great difference.

When, then, the scribes spoke of God's Fatherhood, they conceived it in a sense far less affectionate than did Jesus. It was he who first taught the fact of God's Fatherhood in the sense that moderns understand it. And, just as this doctrine was the source of his ethic, it was equally the source of his soteriology. Men, children of God by the fact of their creation, win salvation by accepting the fact and the responsibilities of sonship—and by trusting to the Father to supply what they cannot supply themselves. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good things unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"[45]

---

[43] Luke 11:52; cf. Matt. 23:13.

[44] *The Synoptic Gospels*, ii, pp. 520–521.

To little children, then, belongs the Kingdom of God; "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein."[46] Now, if we try to analyze this quality of childlikeness too minutely, we shall probably injure the thought; if we attempt to paraphrase it in terms of formal theology we shall certainly ruin it altogether. For the quality of childlikeness is nothing more and nothing less than the quality of childlikeness, and it needs no explanation; everyone knows what it is, provided only he does not think too much about it. Everyone knows the natural attitude of a child toward its father: respect, affection, desire to please, desire to imitate, trust for help and protection—and all without any sense of bargaining. A father does not give his child food because of its good deeds, nor does the child expect food because of its good deeds; a father gives his child food because it is his child. Nor do the child's imperfections destroy the relationship, especially when the father knows the child is anxious to correct bad habits. Nor does a wholesome child trade on its father's affection; the very fact of the father's enduring love may be the strongest means to help a child overcome its faults.

---

[45] Matt. 7:11 = Luke 11:13; Luke's form is slightly Christianized.

[46] Mark 10:15.

But why should we labor the obvious? With every word we are clouding a picture that Jesus left perfectly clear. God is our Father in heaven: from this belief all problems of salvation and of conduct may be solved.

VII. JESUS AND THE KINGDOM

THE RESULTS reached in the last two lectures have revealed a most significant fact: We derive from Jesus' teaching a complete ethic and a complete soteriology, based solely on Jesus' doctrine of the Father. And neither this ethic nor this soteriology utilizes Jesus' promise of the nearness of the coming Kingdom, nor do they refer to Jesus' own position in that Kingdom.[1] So we find in Jesus' words, as they stand in the synoptic sources, not one set of religious ideas but two. One of these, the doctrine of the Father, is—so to speak—"static"; it could have been taught just as appropriately at any other period of Jewish history. The other, the doctrine of the Kingdom—which we still have to investigate—is bound up inseparably with the temporal conditions of Jesus' mission.

In the first set of concepts Jesus' own person is, strictly speaking, dispensable. He aims to give a correct understanding of the Old Testament law; he does so authoritatively, of course, but only as explaining what was already revealed. So others might conceivably come to the same conclusions without his aid; in fact, his rebuke of the scribes for their legal distortions presupposes that—in his opinion—the revelation ought to be sufficiently clear to any honest mind.

---

[1] In such citations of Kingdom passages as were made in Chapters V and VI the mention of the Kingdom does not bear on the main argument.

It would logically follow, then, that Jesus believed that many souls may well have been "saved" without his aid. And that he did so believe, his teaching sets forth unambiguously. The most obvious examples are the Old Testament saints, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Elijah and many others, who, he taught, were certainly with God.[2] The New Testament writers, to be sure, normally explain Old Testament salvation as also the work of Christ, appropriated by individuals with prophetic insight into Jesus and his work; St. John has possibly gone so far as to read this theory back into Jesus' mouth.[3] But this is "theology-after-the-event." There is no trace of such a conception in the Synoptists; it is assumed of course that the prophets predicted Jesus, but this is very different from assuming that they were saved through their predictions.

A still more unambiguous instance is that of John the Baptist. His question, "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?"[4] shows that, whatever he may have believed earlier in his career, he was now really uncertain of Jesus' vocation.[5] And Jesus, who sent back a cautiously worded answer, was quite certain that the Baptist would not be convinced; John's ways and his own were too far apart. None the less, did Jesus hold that because of this unbelief the Baptist was bound for hell? Asking this question exposes its absurdity. He who was a prophet and more than a prophet, than whom no greater had been born of woman,[6] whose baptism Jesus himself had accepted, and which he declared to be of God,[7] this man was certainly the Father's faithful servant, fully assured of the Father's welcome.

---

[2] References are needless.

[3] John 8:56, etc.

[4] Luke 7:20 = Matt. 11:3.

[5] Writers who harmonize the Synoptists with St. John explain the Baptist's question as due to growing doubt. This is, naturally, an incorrect reading of the evidence, but in any case the result is the same: when the Baptist asked the question, he had no real faith in Jesus. Indeed, the harmonizers make his uncertainty especially reprehensible, since they represent it as a turning away from truth once clearly known.

Let us be perfectly clear about this. The case of the Baptist is of fundamental importance. According to Jesus' own teaching, not only may men be saved who have never heard of himself, but men may be saved who have heard of him and have nevertheless rejected him.

"Everyone who shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven."[8] It is possible to reject Jesus through inability to understand him; if this inability comes from no moral fault, but from what theologians call "invincible ignorance" then "it shall be forgiven." Such was the case of the Baptist.

---

[6] Luke 7:26, 28 = Matt. 11:9, 11.

[7] Mark 11:30.

[8] Luke 12:10 = Matt. 12:32. Mark was perturbed by the verse, and in 3:28–29 he has paraphrased it in a form less distressing to Christian ears. In substance this saying is of assured authenticity, for no Christian would have so separated Christ and the Spirit, nor would have so mimimized the consequence of failure to accept Christ.

But if the rejection comes from hatred of Jesus' moral demands, a hatred that roundly declares the righteousness in his teaching to be unrighteous, then "it shall not be forgiven." Such was the case of the Pharisees—or we should rather say, since Jesus speaks in generalities, such their case might become.

According to our sources, consequently, Jesus expected that the saints of old and John the Baptist could come to God in one way, while his own disciples would tread a different way. This double soteriology in his message should be recognized as distinctly and as explicitly as possible, all the more because it is so frequently neglected by investigators. The natural desire to present Jesus' teaching as a simple and unified whole has divided most writers into two general classes according to preference for one or the other aspect. Those who emphasize the Kingdom and Jesus' Messiahship belong normally to the theologically orthodox tradition, but they are likewise represented at the present day by many independent investigators, notably Dr. Schweitzer and the Barthians. In such reconstructions the Fatherhood passages are either ignored or are more or less forcibly explained away; devices of older expositors to discover an atonement doctrine in the parable of the prodigal son are a painful memory. On the other hand, theological liberals find the centre of Jesus' message in his declaration of the Fatherhood of God; the Kingdom passages are then generally interpreted in the light of the "social gospel," while Jesus' own claims are often reduced to assertions of his prophetic power.

Neither of these alternatives is satisfactory, since both leave a residuum of evidence that does not fit into the final reconstruction. Consequently we are bound to ask if the duality is not due to the tradition rather than to Jesus himself, whether the earliest Christian experience has not introduced discordant matter into the sources. If such is the case, the choice between the alternatives is obvious. The instinct of the first Christians was to subordinate everything to the person of the exalted Christ, and to treat belief in his Messiahship and Lordship as the primary touchstone of true faith. So more and more transcendental answers were given to the question, "What think ye of Christ?" We know how these new answers reacted constantly on the tradition of Jesus' words and acts, and in the Synoptic stream quite as truly as in the Johannine. Hence it is in no way surprising that some scholars have taught that the sayings about the transcendent Kingdom and about Jesus' Messiahship are all of Apostolic origin.

As regards the Kingdom passages, however, the controversy has practically reached an end, at least in technical circles.[9] Some twenty years ago, indeed, it was bitter enough, although we are beginning to forget it. It is rather difficult to-day to think ourselves back into the traditional interpretation that was all but universally held until the close of the nineteenth century; as we read it, for instance, in James Orr's article "Kingdom of God" in the second volume[10] of Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible.* Here[11] we are told that the Kingdom is "a slowly developing reality, bound to a law of rhythm . . . with the world and humanity as its sphere of manifestation," in a period of "a prolonged world development," which "advances to its goal, not peacefully or suddenly, but by a succession of great crises, and each of these is in a sense the coming of the Son of Man." Hence the Kingdom is more or less to be identified with the Church, although "the kingdom of God is a wider conception than that of the Church." Yet "The Church is, as a society, the visible expression of this kingdom in the world; is indeed the only society which does formally profess . . . to represent it."

---

[9] It persists, however, among popularizers.

As an expository and theological definition, best corresponding to the Synoptic concepts as interpreted by the light of historic Christian experience, these statements of Orr's would be widely accepted to-day, but very few scholars would now defend them as true exegesis. We have learned too much about the vocabulary of New Testament Judaism, especially as moulded by apocalyptics. Jesus used "Kingdom of God" not as a new creation of his own, but as a term perfectly familiar to his hearers, as something that every school-child could define. Therefore, except in so far as he explicitly and unambiguously modified the definition, we must assume that he and his hearers used the phrase in the same sense.

---

[10] 1900.

[11] pp. 854 f.

Now, the Jewish sense of "Kingdom of God" is not open to doubt; it describes that purely supernatural state of affairs when God—and God alone—shall rule over men. Hence, we may be pardoned if we repeat, the beginning of the Kingdom has no true continuity with human history. When the Kingdom is inaugurated, human history ceases; the new age is almost anything rather than the result of evolutionary progress.[12] This was a basic belief of Jewish eschatology everywhere, whether apocalyptic or not; apocalyptists differed in this regard from non-apocalyptists only in believing that visible signs proved the advent of the Kingdom in the very near future. Consequently the phrase "The Kingdom of God is at hand" meant to everyone who heard it, "The end of the world is at hand," and could not possibly have had any other significance. And that the overwhelming mass of Kingdom passages in the Synoptists contain this eschatological force is notorious.

This is, of course, in perfect accord with the New Testament background. Ever since Maccabean days apocalyptists had been preaching the imminent destruction of the present age, and they were to continue such preaching for another century to come. The Baptist, whom Jesus praised so unstintingly, was the most passionate preacher of them all, and he fanned the flame of expectation to a white heat; when Jesus began his ministry, the very atmosphere of Galilee was electric with the hope. Jesus, naturally, could have contradicted the belief, but to do so he would have been obliged to use perfectly explicit and even violent language. But of such language we have no trace. If his own tenets were non-apocalyptic, he failed signally in impressing them on his disciples; the latter after his death preached an apocalyptic raised to the infinite power, and through the greater part of the New Testament the nearness of the Day of the Lord is an unquestioned axiom of the Christian faith.

---

[12] The nearest approach to an evolutionary concept is in the Testaments, where the coming of the Kingdom is preceded by an increasing earthly betterment (*e. g.*, Levi 18). Yet even then the actual appearance of the Kingdom is purely miraculous.

Upholders of the "social gospel" as the primary meaning of Jesus' message have, consequently, an unenviable burden of proof to overcome. Appeals to Jesus' sanity of mind and consequent non-apocalypticism are superficially impressive, but only superficially. What the twentieth century Occidental deems mental sanity is a poor criterion to apply to first-century Galileans. Many persons among us expect a proximate millennium without losing their mental balance; in first-century Palestine every sign of the times pointed irresistibly to the fulfilment of God's promises to interpose into the course of this earth's normal progress.

When, moreover, we turn to the positive evidence adduced to show the non-apocalyptic character of Jesus' teaching, we find this evidence unimpressive. The passages[13] that declare that the whole earth must hear the gospel before the end are Christian elaborations of a saying[14] that gave no such promise.[15] Often cited as proving a possible indefinite delay of the end is, "Of that day or that hour knoweth no one,"[16] but here the emphasis is on "day" and "hour" taken strictly; the generation could be predicted but not the exact time within the generation.

Nor do the sayings that speak of the Kingdom as already present conflict with the future emphasis. No one expected the total coming of the Kingdom to be instantaneous: the apocalyptists invariably describe a succession of divine acts that lead up to the final consummation. But, since these acts are always intimately connected in a close temporal sequence, even the first of them may be spoken of as the Kingdom's coming.[17] No other conception is to be found in Jesus' oft-quoted parables of growth, the leaven,[18] the mustard seed,[19] and the growing grain:[20] God's initial act has been performed and, as soon as its consequences have been felt, the next act will follow: "When the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." In so far as the power of God's act is manifested in the work of Jesus, the Kingdom may be said to have "come in contact" with men;[21] in so far as Jesus' disciples have shared in this power which he has brought, they may be said to be "in" the Kingdom.[22]

---

[13] Mark 13:10 = Matt. 24:14.

[14] Matt. 10:18; cf. Luke 12:11–12.

[15] We should also note that to the Evangelists the "world" was so small that its complete evangelization in thirty or forty years was wholly conceivable.

[16] Mark 13:32 = Matt. 24:36.

[17] Compare Acts 2:17–20.

[18] Luke 13:20–21 = Matt. 13:33.

[19] Luke 13:18–19 = Matt. 13:31–32 = Mark 4:30–32. Luke's form is the most primitive.

The perspective throughout is short. We should naturally not overstress time elements in a parable, but we have at least the duty to note that there is no parable of Jesus' that compares the development of the present Kingdom to the growth of an oak tree from an acorn; grain and mustard seed grow up in a few weeks, while leaven works overnight. We must consequently read Jesus' predictions of the coming Kingdom exactly as we read the predictions in any of the apocalypses: once the process has begun, the time is short. And so there is nothing in the teaching about the present Kingdom that contradicts the constantly reiterated message that announces the end to be at hand; all the evidence points irresistibly toward the only possible conclusion: Jesus expected the consummation within the lifetime of his own generation.[23]

---

[20] Mark 4:26–29; compare Matt. 13:24–30.

[21] Luke 11:20 = Matt. 12:28.

[22] Luke 7:28 = Matt. 11:11; compare Luke 10:11, where the Kingdom is said to "come in contact" with men as the result of the disciples' preaching. Compare also Luke 10:20.

[23] No one, of course, would deny that our Synoptic sources contain sec-

It was a shock when the truth of all this was borne home to us something like a quarter of a century ago, and to many it seemed for the moment that this apocalypticism undermined Jesus' authority. Hence frantic protests were only to be expected—but the evidence was too clear. And even conservative theologians quickly realized that nothing vital was really in question; the necessary adjustments were readily made, and in most circles Jesus' apocalypticism has become something taken for granted.

Jesus, then, taught the approach of the supernatural Kingdom, in accord with the general teaching of the day and, in particular, in accord with the preaching of John the Baptist. But did he confine himself to announcing its approach, and to proclaiming the conditions under which entrance might be won? Or did he believe that his own work was vital in bringing in the Kingdom? And what position did he expect to occupy in the Kingdom when it came? Was he to be simply first among many brethren? Or did he conceive himself to be in some way distinct from these brethren, destined to be—under God—the Kingdom's King? In a word, did Jesus claim Messiahship?

Here the critical debate still goes on, and may perhaps go on indefinitely. From this debate,

---

ondary apocalyptic material, particularly in what is generally known as the "Little Apocalypse" (Mark 13:6–8, 14–20, 24–27). But this secondary material merely adds specification of times, signs, etc., to predictions that were primary, but without changing the essential character of these predictions.

however, at least one conclusion has definitely emerged; we have no possible right to foreclose the question in advance by asserting that Jesus *could* not have thought of himself as an apocalyptic being. If an ordinary Occidental of the twentieth century should claim such an honor, undoubtedly we should suspect mental derangement; but Jesus was not of the twentieth century, he was not an Occidental, nor—most important of all—was he in any way "ordinary." We have no right to measure his self-consciousness by our own. None of us can tell how Jesus *ought* to have conceived his personal relationship to God; all we can do is to undertake a critical sifting of the evidence to determine, as best we may, how he actually *did* conceive this relationship.

Once more, the superficial evidence of our sources is unambiguous: Jesus accepted the title of Messiah from his disciples, claimed even to be the apocalyptic Son of Man, made this claim publicly before the Sanhedrin, was found by them to be guilty of blasphemy, was adjudged by Pilate to have made regal claims, and was crucified under a *titulum:* "The King of the Jews." How far is this evidence trustworthy?

We may begin with the title on the cross. In the first edition of *Kyrios Christos* (1913) Bousset called it in question.[24] A *titulum* was certainly placed on the cross, for such was the Roman custom. But Bousset could not believe that Pilate offended Jewish sensibilities with the Gospel wording,[25] while the women who viewed the crucifixion —and who according to Bousset were the only eyewitnesses among the disciples—would not have been able "from afar"[26] to read what was actually written. Hence the Christian community, ignorant of the true wording, invented "King of the Jews" to make Pilate an unconscious witness of the truth of the new faith.

---

[24] p. 56; compare also his note in *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments,* 3d edition, i, pp. 220–221 (1917).

To this we may observe that, whatever the women were or were not able to decipher, if the disciples on Good Friday night were ignorant of the contents of the *titulum*, they were the only persons in Jerusalem in that condition. The inscription above Jesus was necessarily a notorious matter of common knowledge and remained so for years; equally familiar to both Christians and non-Christians among the Palestinians. So it is hardly needful to point out that among the Christians Simon of Cyrene was an indubitable eyewitness to the title; he could not have helped reading it as it was carried before Jesus on the way to Golgotha.

We may further observe that "King of the Jews" was always regarded by Christians as an inadequate appellation for their Lord, and that it was rapidly to become a highly embarrassing appellation. It labelled Christians as followers of a man executed as a rebel against Rome, and so continually called their imperial loyalty into question. The Fourth Evangelist, in fact, felt obliged to explain at length that Jesus' kingship was not of this world, and that there was no danger that his servants would fight.[27] Even to Mark, writing not long after Nero's persecution and in the shadow of the Jewish rebellion, "King of the Jews" would have been equally distasteful—quite apart from his own conception of the universality of Jesus' Messiahship. So Christian invention of the *titulum* may be ruled out, and Bousset himself withdrew his objections in the second edition of *Kyrios Christos*.[28] We have, then, as an assured fact that Pilate crucified Jesus as a royal pretender.

---

[25] Compare John 19:21; to Bousset a Christian afterthought.

[26] Mark 15:40.

What specific charges were alleged by the Jewish prosecutors to substantiate their case? Our sources tell us little, since their purpose is to represent the procurator as convinced of Jesus' innocence. So Mark's version[29] is indirect; the chief priests accused Jesus of "many things" that were summed up in the royal claim. Matthew reproduces Mark. John, like Mark, lets the supreme claim appear first in Pilate's interrogatory;[30] he says nothing of Mark's "many things," but a new element appears in the words of the Jews, "He made himself the Son of God."[31] To John "Son of God" has a full "metaphysical" sense, and so Pilate understands it; as it stands, then, this passage is Johannine apologetic.

---

[27] John 18:33–38.

[28] Published posthumously in 1921; Bousset died in 1920.

[29] 15:1–5.

[30] John 18:33.

[31] John 19:7.

Luke[32] is more specific: "We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he is Christ, a king"; and, "He stirreth up the people . . . beginning from Galilee even unto this place." Perhaps Luke or his source[33] composed this indictment, but it must fairly represent the facts. Disorders in connection with Jesus had no doubt occurred at intervals, while the triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the cleansing of the temple would have been viewed askance by any Roman functionary. When Jesus was asked about the legality of the tribute, his revelation of the true principle involved[34] left the conclusion, "It is lawful to give tribute," unspoken. Witnesses, consequently, could have quoted him as refusing to give an unambiguous affirmative; indeed, Dr. Eisler has recently argued that Mark 12:13–17 actually declares tribute unlawful.[35]

The Old Russian Josephus[36] tells of a conspiracy of the followers of Jesus on the Mount of Olives, who "made known to him their will, that he should enter into the city and cut down the Roman troops and Pilate, and rule over us (?)"; uncertainty as to the text leaves Jesus' reply doubt-ful. The Jewish leaders, hearing of this conspiracy, "assembled together with the high priest" in fear of the Romans and denounced Jesus to Pilate. "And he sent and had many of the multitude slain. And he had that Wonder-worker brought up, and after instituting an inquiry concerning him, he pronounced judgment: 'He is a malefactor, a rebel, covetous of kingship.' "

---

[32] 23:1–5.

[33] The section is from L.

[34] Mark 12:13–17.

[35] *Iesous*, ii, p. 200. Dr. Eisler contends that Jesus held possession of money in any form to be a sin.

[36] Thackeray's *Josephus*, iii, pp. 648–659 (1928); emended and annotated by Dr. Eisler. Reprinted, with further emendations, in *Iesous*, ii, pages 298 f.

This story is obviously of Jewish origin, and it may well have been written by Josephus. Again we have the claim to kingship as the climax of the condemnation; again we have the denunciation of Jesus made by the Jewish leaders "assembled together with the high priest." Otherwise the story is mere Jewish apologetic, declaring that Jesus was justly condemned, and that the Jews only protected themselves against the results of a hot-headed revolt. In the mention of the Mount of Olives we may have a shadowy recollection of the triumphal entry, but the alleged massacre of Jesus' disciples cannot by any ingenuity be fitted into the tradition—not even by Dr. Eisler's device of transferring the events of Luke 13:1–5 into the middle of Holy Week.[37]

The Sanhedrists could make out at least a good enough *prima facie* case that would charge Jesus with revolutionary attempts, and they needed nothing more to accomplish their purpose. But—let us note very carefully—they did not stop here. They added a distinct and independent charge:

---

[37] *Iesous*, ii, pp. 510 ff.

"This man claims to be king." This in no way followed from the assumed revolutionary attempts, for there were many Jewish rebels and very few of them had royal pretensions. It was a new allegation, demanding concrete evidence to support it—and such evidence the Jews brought forward. What was its source?

Not Jesus' prophetic teaching of God's Fatherhood and man's brotherhood, nor his efforts in behalf of the poor and outcast, nor even his cleansing of the temple: these things might have led to his execution as a "bandit," or disturber of public order, but not as "King of the Jews." We certainly cannot believe that the Sanhedrists made up the charge out of whole cloth and perjured themselves before Pilate—and perjured themselves gratuitously, since their case was complete already. Nor can we believe that their indictment rested on unsifted hearsay evidence, which in turn rested on nothing but malicious gossip. The Sanhedrists could not have made the charge without specific testimony.

Moreover. There have been in history pathetically many cases of righteous men martyred on trumped-up charges destitute of truth. But in such cases *some* one always protests; in Jesus' case *no* one protested. Jesus' disciples, of course, did protest vigorously that the sense in which he claimed kingship was no crime in Roman law; but that he actually claimed kingship in some sense his most ardent disciples proclaimed as passionately as his most embittered enemies. The Jews so charged—Pilate so judged—the Christians so affirmed. By what historic right, then, may we moderns assert that all three were wrong?

To this question I, frankly, can find no answer. To overcome the very real weight of the argument as set forth we need very relevant counter-evidence—and no such counter-evidence is forthcoming. As has been said already, appeals to the general character of Jesus lead nowhere. The plea that early Christian faith in the Messiahship may have been read back into Jesus' mind and mouth is in itself neither more nor less cogent than the plea that early Christian faith in the Messiahship proves Jesus' self-revelation: the question is solely one of concrete evidence. When the Fourth Evangelist makes Jesus proclaim full universalism, his testimony conflicts with that of the Synoptists, early Christian history and St. Paul's struggles. But in the matter of the Messiahship we have no such conflict; on the contrary, Jesus' attitude as depicted by the more primitive part of the tradition agrees entirely with the evidence thus far assembled.

At Pilate's trial Jesus is represented as refusing to answer the Jewish charges, except on the most incriminating point of all: to the procurator's question, "Art thou the king of the Jews?" he replied with the bald affirmative, "Thou sayest." The other accusations were too far from the truth to need a reply, but he was unwilling even to seem to deny that there was a sense in which his "regal" claims were true.

Around the proceedings before the Sanhedrin a whole special literature of Synoptic criticism has grown up, more particularly in the comparison of Mark 14:53–65 and parallels with the Mishnic tractate *Sanhedrin.* But here we should enter at least two preliminary caveats. The tractate embodies not the actual rules in force in the year A. D. 30, but the rules which Rabbis a century and more thereafter held to be correct; hence much of *Sanhedrin* is merely academic.[38] In the second place, the rules aim to safeguard the council from undue rashness in assuming responsibility for a death sentence. But this responsibility the Sanhedrin of Jesus' day could not assume: the most it could do was to decide to prosecute a capital case in Pilate's court. So questions of the "legality" of the session—at night, possibly on the eve of the Passover, etc.,—are beside the mark.

Nor is the oft-repeated argument of real moment which asserts that, since no Christian witnesses were present, the tradition is untrustworthy. Jesus was universally known in Palestine, and it is inconceivable that the authorities did not reveal their reasons for denouncing him to the procurator. If the present account is not authentic, it was not invented to cover up ignorance; it was invented to replace an account which the Christians found obnoxious and which they wished to suppress. But in this case the Christians contrived to concoct a story that was still most unsatisfactory, for all our sources are embarrassed by the testimony of the witnesses, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'"[39] Mark asserts that this testimony was false; Matthew[40] gives it a turn Christians could accept; Luke omits it altogether; John[41] explains it as pure allegory. Evidently, then, the tradition gave the saying only because it was too well known to be denied—in other words, the tradition is in touch with the actual facts.[42] Indeed, this section gives us the only really satisfactory explanation of the subsequent events: the Jews could confidently press the charge of Messianic claims because they had heard Jesus make such claims.

---

[38] Compare page 99.

And this brings us finally to the basic question of all: Jesus' claim to be not only Messiah, but celestial Messiah; to be not only "the Messiah, the son of the Blessed," but to be Messiah in the most exalted sense of the term, to be the heavenly "Son of Man." Did Jesus actually make this claim also?

We can answer this question most simply with another. In what other possible sense could a Messianic claim be made in the face of imminent death?

---

[39] Mark 14:58.

[40] Matt. 26:61.

[41] John 2:21.

[42] This of course does not mean that we accept as Jesus' words what the Sanhedrists' account asserted that the witnesses testified they had heard him say. But compare the "western" addition to Mark 13:2.

It was the essence of the definition of Messiahship that the holder of the office should achieve his purpose; a Messiah with his work undone was no Messiah at all. To Jesus, then, facing his enemies and knowing that the end was at hand, there were only two alternatives: either he must abandon all claim to Messianic dignity—or else look for its fulfillment beyond the grave and in the world to come. And such a Messiah is by definition the celestial Messiah, "the Man from heaven," "the Son of Man." In this form Jesus actually conceived of himself; in no other way can we gain a consistent meaning from the chain of evidence inseparably united with the certain historical fact that Jesus' cross bore the inscription, "The King of the Jews."

Undoubtedly in many of its occurrences in our sources the phrase "Son of Man" is of later origin; the tradition of Jesus' apocalyptic words was peculiarly susceptible of enlargement from Jewish and Christian teaching. There are likewise Synoptic passages in which "son of man" is used in no apocalyptic sense, but rather as a mere synonym for "man." As a result the evidence has become extraordinarily complicated, and he would be bold indeed who would undertake to restore the exact "original" term in the seventy-odd passages involved. But behind all this tangle is positive—to me, unshakable—evidence that Jesus used as a self-designation "Son of Man" in its fullest apocalyptic force.

VIII. JESUS

JESUS BEGAN his ministry with the proclamation, "The Kingdom of God is at hand." He thus accepted a teaching dominant in Judaism for two centuries, a teaching, moreover, that the Baptist had left ringing in everyone's ears. So in this aspect of Jesus' message there was no novelty. He simply took it over as he found it, and for the true characteristics of his doctrine we must look more deeply.

Since God's Kingdom is at hand, divine judgment is equally at hand, and only those who can survive this judgment may hope to enter into the approaching heavenly state. The apocalyptic promise, therefore, is indissolubly bound up with an ethical warning, and those unready to face the coming sifting are bidden to repent. Yet a demand for repentance remains meaningless until given concrete content, and so the apocalyptist is of necessity an ethical prophet as well, declaring the nature of the repentance that God now demands. It is in this way that, *e. g.*, the parable of the wise and foolish virgins and the Sermon on the Mount become integral parts of the same message.[1]

Yet, parts of the same message though they are, in Jesus' case the apocalyptic element did not intrude into the ethical so as to distort it. It did not become an interim ethic; a series of emergency rules for the brief time that this earth will continue. Such an interim ethic seems actually to have been preached by the Baptist,[2] but it was not taught by Jesus. A little ethic of the sort, no doubt, has made its way into the Third Gospel, but this is the work of L or Luke.[3] But when Jesus teaches, "Be not anxious for your life," the motive given is not the nearness of the Kingdom when all human lives cease, but God's unfailing care for the birds and the flowers.[4] Or, in warning against the folly of trust in human wealth, the parable of the rich fool[5] urges not the closeness of God's apocalyptic judgment but humanity's constant liability to death. It was with such teaching, based on the character of God and man's duty to imitate God[6]—hence independent of time and place, and universally true—that Jesus opened his work.

---

[1] Moderns sometimes attempt to distinguish between ethical and apocalyptic elements, as if the two were mutually exclusive. Such an attempt is quite unhistorical.

Yet this could not have been the beginning of his own convictions. The Nazareth life of Jesus offers to all of us an enticing field of speculation, and countless attempts have been made to peer back into this earlier period. Such attempts, of course, are usually to little purpose, but in the first ethical message we have a guide to at least part of the truth. Teaching like Jesus' does not come full-blown as the result of a sudden religious experience, no matter how divine, but is the fruit of years of meditation. From childhood he had heard God's Law expounded, from the school teachers, from the synagogue preachers, from the elders of Nazareth as the official interpreters and—doubtless most authoritative of all—from visiting scribes. And with all this exposition he was discontented, and at not a little of it he was indignant; Jesus *knew* God's will was different.

---

[2] As far as we can judge from the scanty remnants of his words.

[3] Compare page 17.

[4] Luke 12:22–28 = Matt. 6:25–30.

[5] Luke 12:16–20.

[6] Compare page 135.

Equally familiar in Nazareth was the national hatred of Rome; perhaps all the keener in Galilee because Rome's rule was exercised indirectly through Antipas. Between Rome's rule and God's rule no more poignant contrast could be imagined, especially when Quirinius' suppression of the revolt of Judas was fresh in everyone's mind; the aftermath of this must have embittered all Galilee during Jesus' adolescence and early manhood. It was no wonder that "Thou shalt hate thine enemy" was taught as a divinely necessary complement to "Thou shalt love thy neighbor," nor that men were already looking forward to the next war as willed by God for His people's final deliverance. Under such circumstances it was socially dangerous to believe that Roman officials could be anything but accursed. "The gentle" and "the peacemakers" were religiously suspect in a nation where the violent were essaying to take the Kingdom of God by storm,[7] and where to render anything at all to

---

[7] Matt. 11:12.

Cæsar might be regarded as apostasy from God. And here again Jesus was indignant at such expositions of God's desire for men; Jesus *knew* that God's will was different.

How did Jesus know these things? If we could answer this question completely, we should solve the whole problem of Christology. Jesus never explains the source of his knowledge. It exists and it is inerrant; as far as he is concerned, with his "But I say unto you" any discussion is closed. We may gain some help, however, from the story of his visit to the temple at the age of twelve; whatever we may think of this account[8] from the critical point of view, it perfectly depicts a self-consciousness characteristic of Jesus throughout his later ministry. We are told here that he was unable to understand why Joseph and Mary had been in doubt where to search for him: "Did ye not know I would be in my Father's house?" That is, his consciousness of God's Fatherhood in general was intimately bound up with a vivid sense of God's Fatherhood in relation to himself concretely; this sense was so keen that he could think of himself only as an infallible messenger of the Father's will.

None the less, until his thirtieth year he kept silent. We can hardly avoid thinking that he was uncertain as to his commission, not yet clear as to the authority with which he could speak. Without such problems as already present to his mind we cannot understand the baptismal experience. The conviction that then burst on him could not have come without preparation; it could have come only to one long conscious of God's call, but still in doubt as to the call's exact nature. All of this must never be forgotten if we are to form an historic picture of Jesus. Most fictional reconstructions of "the unknown years" represent him as in the highest degree friendly and sociable, and often as a member of a gay band of boyish comrades. Friendly and—within limits—sociable Jesus undoubtedly was, and he very likely had many comrades. But behind all these contacts there must have been a sense of unforgetable aloofness and—at times—unapproachableness. The warmest friendship others felt for him must always have been tempered with respect. Jesus knew himself to be *different*.

---

[8] Luke 2:41–51.

With the preaching of the Baptist came the first crisis, for Jesus recognized in the Baptist's message many of his own thoughts,[9] which were now publicly proclaimed to the world. John the prophet was truly making ready for the Lord a people prepared for Him; the baptism that God had sent John to perform was a consecration of the nation to a higher (apocalyptic) stage; the way was now open for the appearance of the Messiah. And when Jesus submitted to this baptism, he came forth from the water unshakably conscious that he himself was that Messiah. All the intimations of his past life were now explained.

---

[9] Compare page 77.

The significance of the Temptation that follows[10] needs little discussion. It describes in concrete and dramatic form Jesus' first uncertainty as to how his work was to be begun; and its issue was the method he actually followed. Man lives by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God: the orderly course of nature as God had established it provided full opportunity for the accomplishment of Jesus' vocation. In no case is Satan to be worshipped, not even in return for the kingdoms of this world and for all their glory: military Messiahship would appeal to what is worst in human instincts. Nor is God to be tempted: there must be no appeal for a sign that would forcibly overcome men's moral resistance to God's will. And so Jesus, conscious of himself as Messiah, opened his ministry by proclaiming God's righteousness, but with no allusion to himself.

From the beginning, of course, the apocalyptic message was present. Yet the repentance Jesus preached in view of the approach of the Kingdom did not differ essentially from the repentance needed at any other time. At the most the approach of the world catastrophe gave an added solemnity to warnings that were perpetually valid. We must think, then, of Jesus' teaching at the opening of the ministry to be more or less such as we find in the Sermon on the Mount, with a background of somewhat general apocalyptic warnings, such as in the parables of the talents and the virgins; all pervaded with Jesus' doctrine of forgiveness based on the acceptance of God's Fatherhood. It was this preaching that thrilled the multitudes and made Jesus free of the Galilean synagogues. The solemn and authoritative proclamation of the nearness of God to human souls—apocalyptic in form, although not necessarily in content—the description of a Father eager to meet His children more than halfway, the analysis of human duty—which on the one hand brought the ability to understand God's demands within the comprehension of the simplest individual, and on the other hand made inner claims far more drastic than did the scribes—all this took unparalleled hold on the people. "And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread."[11] "And he began to teach by the sea side. And there is gathered unto him a very great multitude, so that he entered into a boat, and sat in the sea; and all the multitudes were by the sea on the land. And he taught them many things."[12]

---

[10] Luke 4:1–12 = Matt. 4:1–11.

To this impression was added Jesus' fame as a wonder-worker; on the whole, an embarrassment. Crowds pressed around him clamorous to be healed, so making preaching difficult or impossible. Usually he enjoined silence on those whom he cured, but often to no purpose; "he went out, and began to publish it much, and to spread abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter."[13]

---

[11] Mark 3:20.

[12] Mark 4:1–2.

Yet Jesus did not look on his healings with indifference. He refused to work any sign to confirm his authority,[14] but the cures as accomplished facts could at least point men's minds in the right direction. After a cure worked outside Galilee he is recorded as saying,[15] "Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee."[16] In the region east of the Sea of Galilee Jesus had no intention of preaching, so that there a reputation as a healer would not interfere with his work; on the contrary, curiosity might lead men to cross the Jordan in order to hear him. Nor in Jesus' reply to the Baptist's messengers, "The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear and the dead are raised up,"[17] are we under any compulsion to understand all the terms figuratively; the arguments are those John could best understand. For the climax, however, Jesus reserved what was to him inmeasurably the more important work: "The poor have the gospel preached unto them."

Somewhat different are the exorcisms, in which, according to the all but universal belief of the times, the healer dealt not with the results of Satan's work but with Satan himself, and face to face. This conception may be roughly expressed in modern values by noting that disease affecting the personality is, from the spiritual standpoint, far more distressing than any physical disorder without psychic consequences. Here in one sense Jesus recognized frankly that his work had parallels; "sons" of the Jews could likewise cast out demons on occasion. Yet he felt that no real comparison could be drawn, for so great was his victorious power that he could think of himself as casting out demons only "by the finger of God."[18] Hence no reconstruction of Jesus' self-consciousness is just that ignores his power to work cures; it occupied a very real place in his estimate of himself, and so added to the sense of remoteness with which he impressed others.

---

[13] Mark 1:45.

[14] Luke 11:29 = Matt. 12:39; compare Mark 8:12. The contrary instance in Mark 2:10 f. cannot belong to the primitive tradition.

[15] Mark 5:19.

[16] On the passage in which this saying occurs see *The Gospel before the Gospels*, pp. 148–150.

[17] Luke 7:22 = Matt. 11:5.

The advent of so astonishing a teacher attracted at once the attention of the religious authorities, specifically the scribes,[19] and it could not have been very long before representatives came down from Jerusalem[20] to investigate. The Gospels, for the most part, represent their encounter with Jesus as hostile from the start, and so it may very well have been in some cases. But we must remember that our sources were composed to teach Christian Jews the distinction between scribism and

---

[18] Luke 11:19–20; compare Matt. 12:27–28.

[19] As far as we can make out, the Galilean sanhedrins preserved a noncommittal attitude.

[20] Mark 3:22.

"the Way," and not to explain historically the growth of the tension between Jesus and his adversaries. The picture in the tradition is, consequently, too uniformly dark. Luke, for instance, following L, gives us three occasions on which Jesus received and accepted invitations to eat at Pharisaic tables,[21] something quite impossible if only implacable enmity existed. And on the first of these occasions the original account told only of a natural question and of a friendly answer which may very well have convinced Jesus' host.[22] We remember also the peaceful tone of the discussion about the meaning of "neighbor" with a certain "lawyer,"[23] and the warm praise that a scribe showered on Jesus' summary of the Law.[24] But, however gradual the historic divergence may have been, the final breach was inevitable: Jesus and Pharisaic scribism were incompatible. It was only a question of time before a declaration of war on both sides, Jesus declaring, "Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition,"[25] and the Pharisees rejoining, "He hath Beelzebub."[26]

The more liberal modern Jewish critics complain that Jesus did not do sufficient justice to the difficulties of the Pharisaic position, nor to the nationalistic worth of the tradition which the Pharisees were maintaining.[27] Here there is a value judgment, about which it is not profitable to argue much. If preservation of Jewish nationalism was truly the highest good, and if this nationalism could be preserved only by the Pharisaic rules, then a real case can be made out against Jesus for lack of sympathy. But if God's righteousness is something other than the nationalism expressed in Pharisaic scribism, the criticism is beside the mark.

---

[21] Luke 7:36, 11:37, 14:1.

[22] Luke 7:44–46 was added by the compiler of L to give the narrative a sharper anti-Pharisaic point.

[23] Luke 10:25–28.

[24] Mark 12:28–34. It is characteristic that Matthew eliminates this praise in his parallel, while Luke omits the incident entirely.

[25] Mark 7:9.

[26] Mark 3:22; compare Luke 11:15 = Matt. 12:24.

In any event, since the Pharisaic tenets had not yet been written into the official code of Judaism, the scribes had no legal recourse against Jesus for his teaching. Their only hope was to attack claims that he might make for his personal authority; if, for instance, he should publicly declare himself to be a prophet, they could denounce him. At first, to be sure, he gave them nothing to lay hold on, but they could wait. No man could speak as Jesus spoke without sooner or later appealing to a special divine commission—and rumors were assuredly afloat that the commission Jesus claimed was very exalted.

In the meantime, from the mass of more or less superficially enthusiastic people who surrounded him, Jesus was gradually recognizing certain individuals as his disciples; men and women who showed a real understanding of his message. These were taught that they need not trouble themselves overmuch about ritual purity nor even about too strict an observance of the Sabbath. In place of the lengthy prayers that were normal among the devout they were instructed to use frequent brief petitions, and the only formula given them was extremely concise.[28] Perhaps most significant of all was the discarding of fasting, to the bewilderment of the pious. When Jesus was asked the reason for this he replied that no one would put new wine in old bottles.[29]

---

[27] *E. g.*, the quotation from Dr. Klausner on page 125.

Here we have the first intimation that Jesus was conscious of being more than a reformer of the current misinterpretations of the Law. While he held tenaciously that his moral teaching was, in fact, only the Law properly expounded, yet at the same time he was aware that part of his message was not in the Law at all, but was something wholly novel. This was the result of the apocalyptic hope. What the Baptist had initiated, Jesus felt he was carrying on to completion; he had actually made ready a people prepared for the Lord. He had taught his disciples that they were already children of their heavenly Father, and that they should as such live joyfully. Fasting for them had become incongruous; can the members of a marriage party fast while the festivities are in progress?[30] So from the earliest days the disciples were taught a group-self-consciousness that marked them off sharply from the rest of the nation. And Jesus, as the chief of the group, "came eating and drinking," so confident in the Father's care that his enemies derided him as a "gluttonous man and a winebibber."[31]

---

[28] Luke 11:2–4, Matt. 6:8, Luke 11:8, 18:3.

[29] Mark 2:22.

[30] Mark 2:19a. Verses 19b–20 are of course a Christian expansion that identifies the "Bridegroom" with Christ.

Of group organization, of course, there was none, but Jesus gradually selected from among his disciples those whom he judged capable of becoming "fishers of men," of teaching as well as learning. To these was given the decisive command, "Follow me!"; if they accepted it, they bound themselves literally to forsake all and to be at Jesus' entire disposition. Of these special followers there was an inner group of four—Peter, Andrew, James and John—and a wider circle of twelve;[32] in addition perhaps a still larger number whose services were utilized on occasion. Our tradition has concentrated all the work of these preachers into a single[33] formal mission of the Twelve, but the truth is more probably that they were sent out in small groups from time to time as soon as their preparation was complete.[34] In any case, toward the end of the Galilean ministry Jesus had become the centre of an intensive preaching work, carried out over the whole tetrarchy by missionaries acting in his service.

---

[31] Luke 7:34 = Matt. 11:19.

[32] The attempt to delete "the twelve" from I Cor. 15:5 rests on very slender evidence. And the argument that the number twelve is read back into the Synoptic tradition from the Jerusalem presbyterate seems to reverse the actual order of history; the picture in the early part of Acts of the Twelve serving as presbyters is an anachronism.

[33] Artificially duplicated by Luke in his ninth and tenth chapters.

[34] Compare Luke 9:60.

In Luke 10:17 we are told of the return of one of these groups to Jesus, announcing a success so brilliant that it called forth from him a unique thanksgiving.[35] Its opening words breathe a profound relief. Anyone would expect that God's message to Israel would be received first of all by the "wise and prudent." Yet these had proved obdurate. So, for a while, it may have seemed to Jesus questionable if his attempts could succeed, since he could win no one to take up his work. But now it had been proved that "babes" could not only learn the truth, but could proclaim it triumphantly. So not only a fresh knowledge but a fresh power was present among men.

And this power was nothing less than the first workings on earth of the coming Kingdom, "in" which these disciples could be said to be,[36] with their names already inscribed on the heavenly roster of its citizens.[37] And the means by which the disciples had attained to this privilege was faith in Jesus. Final salvation, no doubt, they might have won otherwise, but to these disciples Jesus had given more than final salvation. Through their devotion to him they had received even in the present world a true share of the life and the powers that belong to heaven.

---

[35] Luke 10:21–22 = Matt. 11:25–26. Luke's context is correct. Matthew, who has omitted all account of either the departure or the return of the disciples, has been obliged to change "in that very hour" into the vague "at that season."

[36] Luke 7:28 = Matt. 11:11.

[37] Luke 10:20.

It was from this conviction, based on this experience, that Jesus developed the second part of what we have called his "double soteriology."[38] The external situation pointed acutely the uniqueness of the occasion. True devotion to God may at any time lead to conflicts with men, but Jesus' disciples could not escape conflicts. The issue between his special service and ordinary life in Judaism was set sharp and hard: "I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household."[39] Hence it behooved men to count very carefully the cost before they attempted to ally their fortunes with Jesus,[40] for once they had begun to find God according to his full teaching, there was no turning back to the other method of salvation: "He that denieth me in the presence of men, shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God."[41] On the other hand, his faithful disciples would win not only heaven but the highest possible rank in heaven: Ye who "have continued with me in my tribulations . . . shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."[42]

---

[38] Page 157.

[39] Matt. 10:35 f. Compare L's even more acute version in Luke 14:26.

[40] Luke 14:28–32.

[41] Luke 12:9; compare Matt. 10:33.

[42] Luke 22:28–30 = Matt. 19:28. But Matthew, by inserting "twelve" before "thrones," has (artificially) restricted the promise to the Twelve.

The last citation was given in a shortened form, and its full text reads as follows: "Ye are they who have continued with me in my tribulations; and I appoint unto you royal rule, even as my Father has appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." But, as a matter of fact, the additional words only make explicit what is everywhere presupposed in Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom: it and he are inseparable. It was for this reason that he could bring men within its present influence; by doing this, so enabling them to have "their names written in heaven," he was already doing something of the work of the Messiah.

It was a wholly novel conception and one—as it would seem from his own words—that Jesus himself learned only from the force of events. Only the Father had known the truth about the Son, and only the Son and those to whom the Son revealed it could appreciate this truth.[43] But now Jesus could say thankfully, "All things have been delivered to me by the Father":[44] the mystery of God's plan had been made clear.

From this point onward in Jesus' career the evidence offers little difficulty. While still careful not to claim the Messianic title explicitly, Jesus did not hesitate to use an ambiguous terminology which he knew his disciples could interpret in one way only. The sense in which the above thanksgiving uses "Son" must have been perfectly clear to them. The message he sent to the Baptist had an obvious significance to all who knew Jesus, particularly as it was followed by the contrast between John and those "in" the Kingdom; if the Kingdom was present, the Messiah must be present also. The disciples, then, realized and accepted Jesus' Messiahship well before Peter's confession—and Jesus knew their faith. He knew that this faith of theirs was being maintained despite obstacles so incredible that its foundations must be secure. But a still more incredible obstacle was still to come, and, until this supreme difficulty could be faced, the time was not ripe for explicit discussion of the meaning of his office.

---

[43] Luke 10:22 = Matt. 11:27. There is some textual evidence that the clause "no one knoweth the Father but the Son" is textually interpolated.

[44] "My" before "Father" is presumably a Greek interpretation of the undefined Aramaic "Abba."

Jesus knew now that for himself there could be but one outcome. In Galilee nothing more was left for him to do, and Antipas was beginning to display a suspicious interest in his activities.[45] So, since a message to Israel could not be complete until it was delivered in Jerusalem, to Jerusalem Jesus determined to go—a decision which, as he was very well aware, in all probability meant death. There was always a possibility, no doubt, that Jerusalem might repent, and so it is perhaps incorrect to say that Jesus went up to Jerusalem to die. He went there to deliver God's message, be the results what they might, but there could be little doubt about the result. With this fatal prospect in sight, Jesus' conception of his Messiahship reached its fullest development. The work of the Messiah could not possibly fail, for otherwise he would be no Messiah at all. Death, consequently, would not interfere with Jesus' personal completion of his appointed task; if his success in this world was still incomplete, he must look for his final victory beyond this world. And since death would exalt him out of this world into heaven, the final Messianic achievement would be from heaven. So from this point onward "Son of Man" appears as a self-designation of Jesus.[46]

---

[45] Mark 6:16, Luke 13:31.

Near Cæsarea Philippi the disciples were finally given an opportunity to voice their faith explicitly, and Jesus approved their confession. Yet with his approval came a warning that grave suffering was still to come. In our Gospels the predictions of the passion are given with a prosaic fullness of *ex post facto* detail that has thrown discredit on Jesus' reading of the future; but in Luke 12:50 we have a form that is free from later enlargement: "I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!"[47] Our sources, moreover, represent the disciples as being—somewhat unsystematically—uncomprehending, but this is the result of later reflection. The disciples knew the spirit of Jerusalem perfectly well, and when Jesus deliberately took the road that led to Israel's holy city, "they were amazed, and they that followed were afraid."[48] Undoubtedly they hoped against hope and at times managed to forget their fears,[49] but they could have had no great illusions.

---

[46] In Mark 2:28 "son of man" means simply "man"; compare page 117. In Mark 2:10 there has been some revision of the original tradition.

[47] Compare Mark 10:38.

Jesus deliberately made his entry into Jerusalem as provocative as was humanly possible, so as to force the issue uncompromisingly. At Jericho he let himself be addressed as "Son of David"[50] without protest, and even rewarded the suppliant's faith with a cure. The triumphal entry was staged so as to call everyone's attention to his arrival. He followed it with the still more drastic act of cleansing the temple, and the hierarchs who demanded his authority were contemptuously and publicly ignored. In so doing he took away from the authorities any possibility of postponing a decision. Everyone now knew that Jesus must be put to death, and the only problem remaining was the chief priests' best opportunity. Here perhaps we have an explanation of Judas, who seems to have made up his mind to save what he could out of the wreck.

On problems of chronology it is needless for us to waste time; whether Jesus was executed on the passover or the eve of the passover we shall never know. What is infinitely more important is the interpretation he gave to his death. For Jesus nothing in this world occurs without the Father's will, and so even the most trifling event has a divine significance. Therefore to so shattering an event as the death of the Messiah he must have attached a significance unique in the world's history. He could have conceived it only as definitely vital to God's plan of salvation: through his death men and women would gain an approach to the Father which otherwise would never be theirs.

---

[48] Mark 10:32.

[49] Perhaps memory of their more buoyant moods is partly responsible for the assertions that they "understood none of these things."

[50] Mark 10:47–48.

To say this is not to read back into Jesus' mind formulated theories of the atonement; something that, of course, we must not do. But only by violating everything we know about Jesus can we conceive that he did not think of his body as given for human beings, nor of his blood as poured out for many. Neither can we conceive of him as not attempting to comfort his disciples, who knew as well as he that the end was imminent. And so Jesus closed his work with a symbolic action that assured them that his death was not to be mourned too greatly, that it was for their benefit, and that he and they would be reunited in the Kingdom.

It remained only to warn them that they must not be arrested with him, and it was in accord with his commands that the forcible resistance in Gethsemane occurred.[51] Nor was the "flight" of the disciples contrary to his wishes,[52] for Jesus' work would have been fatally crippled if those whom he had trained had been executed also. If the mustard seed was to grow to full fruition, if the leaven was to penetrate the entire lump, skilled care was essential. Having ensured this, Jesus was ready to yield himself to the sanhedrists.

---

[51] Luke 22:35–38. Matt. 26:52–54 misunderstood the situation.

[52] Mark 14:50 (and perhaps 14:27) are in accord with Mark's usual depreciation of the Twelve. A truer picture of the facts is found in John 18:8–9, whether by use of independent tradition or not.

We have already discussed at some length the issues involved in Jesus' trial. The sanhedrin's investigation was solely to determine whether or not he had made forbidden claims, and a *prima facie* case that he had done so was made out by the testimony of certain witnesses. Their evidence, however, was so confused that Jesus disdained to reply to it, when his turn came to speak. Yet the high priest felt that enough had been educed to warrant requiring the prisoner to plead, and he put to Jesus the pointblank question: "Do you claim to be the Messiah?" To this Jesus replied in the only form possible, affirming his claim and placing its fulfilment in the heavenly world: "From henceforth the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God."[53] And the sanhedrin judged this declaration strictly according to Jewish law. A (false) claim to be a prophet was a capital offence;[54] a claim to be Messiah was a vastly graver crime; a claim to be celestial Messiah, to sit on God's right hand, was nothing short of blasphemy.

Blasphemy, to be sure, was not recognized as a misdeed in Pilate's court, but the sanhedrin knew they could produce sufficient evidence alleging breaches of the peace, etc., to warrant their denunciation of Jesus.[55] Anything that could be made to look like sedition would be regarded by any Roman governor with the utmost severity, and Pilate would certainly not expend much energy in defending the rights of an obscure Jewish provincial. And so it proved. As "King of the Jews" Jesus was crucified.

---

[53] Luke 22:69. This form (L's) is perhaps the most primitive.

[54] Deut. 18:20. The Mishnah (*Sanhedrin*, xi, 1) specifies that the death penalty was to be inflicted by strangling.

Tradition regularly represents the disciples as plunged into despair by his death, as convinced for the moment that all his claims were now proved false and his teaching shown to be presumptuous. And in some instances, no doubt, this may have happened, but I cannot think that in general this picture is fair. Jesus' death did not come on his disciples as a thunderstroke from the blue; they were fully prepared for it, and had awaited it for days. Jesus had told them of its necessity, and he had made clear to them that it would only transfer his Messianic work from earth to heaven. On the first Good Friday night, therefore, grief-stricken though the disciples may have been, they could not have been totally despondent. By his death Jesus had gone to the Father, and in a few years he would return as the glorious Son of Man. His followers could no longer communicate with him,[56] but his teaching was divinely valid, and the obligation to continue preaching what he had taught—and now to preach the necessity of belief in him as Messiah—was stringently incumbent on the apostles whom he had chosen. And their preaching in such terms might very well have met with a real measure of success.

---

[55] Compare page 168.

[56] Jews know nothing of prayers to those in heaven, no matter how exalted their position there may be.

But this question was never put to the test. When immediately afterward the apostolic preaching began,[57] it proclaimed something vastly more than that Jesus was alive with God. It proclaimed that Jesus was *risen*. It proclaimed that he was in contact with earth as well as with heaven; at first in a visible presence, and then enduringly through the Spirit. To the conventional doctrine of the Son of Man awaiting in heaven his manifestation the Christian teaching that he had first come on earth added nothing very material. But the doctrine of an enduring relation between heaven and earth through the Son of Man was wholly novel. At this point Messianism ceases and Christology begins.

The details of the first resurrection visions are, we know, no longer recoverable. Our Gospels are quite unconcerned to marshall evidence for the resurrection; their accounts take the facts so completely for granted that they feel they can afford to indulge in some local topographical rivalries. These we cannot clear up, but Mark 14:28 properly translated—"After I am raised up I will lead you onward into Galilee"[58]—shows the priority of a Jerusalem tradition which Mark 16:7 converted into a Galilean tradition. For our best information we must always fall back on I Cor. 15:5–7, "To Cephas, then to the Twelve, then to above five hundred brethren at once, then to James, then to all the apostles," the list that everyone—"be it I or they"—preached. But by the time our Evangelists wrote interest was maintained only in the appearance "to all the apostles," as the warrant and command for the Christian mission.[59]

---

[57] The forty days' delay in Acts 1 is conventionalized and exaggerated.

The first believers were confident that they had seen Jesus; not as a ghost, not as a visitant from the heavenly world, but as risen. The visions were many. At least three of them were experienced by large groups of men; in at least one of them[60] those present were conscious of an audible command. The visions were not the result of a despair that clutched at straws, for no such despair existed. Nor did the visions produce the Christian message, although they modified it profoundly and gave it triumphal certainty; the message was already in existence. We should observe, moreover, that these visions corresponded to no known psychological laws; they were crowded close together over a large territory, but in a very few days they suddenly ceased—leaving the visionaries fully conscious that they would not occur again. Those that shared the visions, finally, were not prostrated by nervous exhaustion; on the contrary they were filled with a sense of inexhaustible and invincible power.

---

[58] The rendition "I will be in Galilee before you" is impossible. We are not here raising the question as to whether these are or are not authentic words of Jesus.

[59] Luke 24:47, Matt. 28:19, John 20:21; compare Acts 1:8, Mark 16:15.

[60] That to "all the apostles," since they were made apostles by this vision.

These are not rhetorical statements; they are the critically tested facts of history. And to them the historian need here add but one further fact; those who throughout the centuries have shared the faith of the disciples have found themselves in contact with the same source of power and of life.

INDEX OF SUBJECTS

Akiba, 101, 143.
Corban, 106 *f.*, 114.
Dialogues, 34 *ff.*, 41 *f.*
Divorce, 112 *ff.*
Essenes, 92 *f.*
Evil, 136 *ff.*
Food laws, 118 *ff.*
Hillel, 120.
Ignatius, 24.
Jochanan ben Zakkai, 120 *f.*
Josephus, 13, 22, 25, 31, 93 *f.*, 96.
—— Old Russian Version, 78 *ff.*, 168 *ff.*
L., 9 *ff.*, and often.
M., 9, 16.
Mandæans, 67 *ff.*
Miracles, 42 *ff.*, 181 *ff.*
Mishnah. *Chagigah*, 95, 96.
Mishnah. *Nedarim*, 106 *f.*
—— *Sanhedrin*, 98 *f.*, 172, 195.
Non-resistance, 127 *ff.*
Parables, 33.
Passion narrative, 47 *ff.*
Pesiqtha, 120.
Repentance, 141, 149.
Sabbath, 116 *f.*
Sayings-groups, 33, 40.
Social gospel, 132 *ff.*, 161.
Talmud. *Sanhedrin*, 96, 97, 112, 120.
—— (Palestinian). *Qiddushin*, 113.
Teachers, 53 *f.*
Title on the Cross, 165 *ff.*
Ur-Mark, 3.

INDEX OF NAMES

Abraham, 88.
Albertz, 29.
Allen, 9.
Bacon, 3, 4, 58.
Barth, 135, 157.
Bauer, 73.
Berendts, 78.
Bernard, 59 *ff*.
Billerbeck, 31, and often.
Bonwetsch, 78.
Bousset, 68, 89, 91, 165 *ff*.
Brandt, 68, 72.
Bultmann, 22, 29, 131.
Burkitt, 72.
Bussmann, 4, 7.
Carpenter, 59.
Case, 30.
Crum, 7.
Deissmann, 38.
Dibelius, 28 *f*., 32.
Dods, 57.
Eisler, 77, 79 *ff*., 168 *ff*.
Garvie, 60.
Goldschmidt, 84.
Grass, 78.
Gressmann, 89.
Harnack, 7, 10.
Herford, 90, 106, 120, 147.
Holtzmann, 85.
Klausner, 125, 185.
Lidzbarski, 68, 77.
Lightfoot (John), 84.
Loisy, 22.
McCown, 132.
Macgregor, 59 *f*.
Manson, 3.
Martensen, 129.
Mead, 69, 78.
Meyer, 3.
Moffatt, 58.
Montefiore, 88, 104, 107, 151.
Moore, 89.
Norberg, 68.
Orr, 159.
Pallis, 69, 72.
Petermann, 68.
Plummer, 1.
Rawlinson, 22.
Reitzenstein, 68 *ff*., 75 *ff*.
Robinson (B. W.), 58.
Rodkinson, 84.
Sanday, 57, 63.
Schechter, 88, 104.
Schmidt (K. L.), 29.
Schürer, 93.
Schwab, 85.
Schweitzer, 157.
Scott (E. F.), 58.
Strachan, 58, 60.
Strack, 31, and often.
Streeter, 2, 9, 13, 16.
Swete, 2, 55, 63.
Taylor (Vincent), 3.
Thackeray, 78.
Weber, 86.
Weiss (B.), 3, 9, 16.
Weiss (J.), 3.
Wellhausen, 21.
Werner, 6.
Westcott, 28, 57, 59.
Windisch, 132, 145, 147.
Wünsche, 85.
Zangwill, 88, 102.

INDEX OF TEXTS

Genesis—
ii, 24............113
iv, 8............22
Exodus—
iii, 6............139.
xiii, 9...........110.
xx, 12...........114.
xxi, 24..........115.
Leviticus—
xvii-xviii ....114.
xix, 12..........114.
xix, 18..........119, 122.
Numbers—
xix, 2...........121.
Deuteronomy—
vi, 5............119, 122.
xviii, 20.........195.
xxiv, 1–4........112 *f.*
I Samuel—
xxi, 1–6.........117 *f.*
II Chronicles—
xxiv, 21.........22.
Psalms—
viii, 4...........117.
Proverbs—
xxv, 21–22......127.
Ezekiel—
xviii, 27.........141.
Zechariah—
i, 1.............22.
Malachi—
ii, 16............112.
II Esdras—
viii, 2–3.........143.
Wisdom—
xv, 2............142.
II Maccabees—
7: 37–38.........139.
IV Maccabees—
v, 25–26.........118.
Testament of Levi—
xviii............160.
Matthew—
iii, 9............141 *f.*
14–15..........71.
iv, 1–11.........180.
4.............109.
17............141.
v-vii............9, 15.
v...............13 *f.*
v, 18............122.
19............24.
20............144.
29............144.
32............126.
33–37.........16.
38–39.........114 *f.*
39............127.
43–44.........114 *f.*
44–45.........134.
45............135.
48............134, 136, 144.
vi, 4............105.
6.............127.
8.............186.
9–13..........8.
19–21.........17.
25–30.........176.
vii, 7–11........8.
11............152.
14............150.
20............144.
26–27.........144.
viii, 11–12......24.
x, 5–42.........9.
5.............111.
17–18.........19.
18............162.
20............18.
24............61.

29............138.
33............189.
35–36........189.
xi, 3...........155.
5............182.
9–11.........156.
11...........163, 188.
12...........177.
19...........187.
25–27........22, 188, 190.
xii, 3..........122.
8............117.
24...........43, 184.
27–28........183.
28...........163.
32...........156.
39...........182.
xiii, 3–52.......9, 34.
24–30........163.
31–32........162.
33...........162.
37–42........33.
49–50........33.
52...........32.
xv, 1–20.......6.
xviii...........9.
xix, 7–8........112 *f.*
9............126.
28...........21, 189.
xxi, 28–32......42.
31...........147.
xxii, 7.........24.
40...........119.
xxiii...........9.
xxiii, 2...........24.
4............103.
5............110.
8–10.........32, 54.
13...........151.
35...........22.
xxiv–xxv.......9.
xxiv...........21.
xxiv, 11–12.....24.
12...........146.
14...........24, 162.
15...........24.
36...........162.
xxvi, 52–54.....194.
61...........173.
xxvii, 11–14....167.
xxviii, 19.......24, 198.
Mark—
i, 21–22........50.
24–25........6, 53.
44...........50, 109.
45...........182.
ii, 1–iii, 6.......35.
ii, 1–12........137.
10...........192.
14...........23.
15...........34.
16...........147.
17–18........34.
17...........42.
18–28........36.
19–22........186.
23...........34, 55.
25–26........117.
25...........109.
27–28........116 *f.*
28...........192
iii, 1–6.........13, 43.
1............34.
6............34.
7–13.........19.
20...........181.
21...........5.
22–30........48.
22...........43, 183 *f.*
28–29........156.
31–35........5.
34...........148.
iv, 1–34........34.
1–2..........181.
14–20........33.
26–29........163.
30–32........162.
v, 19..........50, 182.
vi, 4...........5.
7–13.........20.
14–29........48.
31–46........63 *f.*
39...........55.
45...........65.

52............5.
vi, 32–vii, 37....44.
vii, 1–23........114.
9.............184.
11–12........106 *f.*
15............118, 124.
19............5 *f.*
vii, 24–viii, 26...5, 44.
viii, 1–26.......44.
12............182.
ix, 30–50........36.
38–40.........5.
x, 2–9...........113.
7.............109.
15............152 *f.*
18............136.
32–45.........36.
32............193.
38............192.
45............139.
47–48.........193.
xi, 15...........130.
17............109, 111.
30–33.........77.
30............156.
xii, 13–34......35.
13–17.........168.
17............34, 132.
26–27.........139.
28–34.........120, 184.
36............109.
37............147.
38–40.........20.
xiii.............163 *f.*
xiii, 2..........173.
9–10..........19.
10............162.
12............12.
32............162.
xiv–xv..........47 *ff.*
xiv, 24.........139.
27............194.
28............197.
36............140.
50............5, 194.
53–65.........172.
58............173.
xv, 1–5.........167.
26............165 *ff.*
40............165 *ff.*
xvi, 7..........198.
15............198.
Luke—
i, 3.............55.
ii, 32...........25.
41–51.........178.
iii, 8...........141 *f.*
iv, 1–12........180.
4.............109.
43............39.
v, 27...........23.
vi, 5............117.
20–49.........15.
20............33.
27–38.........13 *f.*, 33.
vii, 20.........155.
22............182.
26–28.........156.
28............163, 188.
29............42.
34............187.
36–50.........17, 184.
41–42.........42.
47............42.
viii, 2–3........32.
ix, 60..........187.
x–xvi...........54 *f.*
x, 11...........163.
17–20.........8, 163, 188.
21–22.........22, 188, 190.
25–28.........184.
30–37.........129.
xi, 1–13........8.
2–4...........186.
8.............186.
13............152.
15............43, 184.
19–20.........183.
20............163.
21–22.........8.
29............33, 182.
37............184.
45............33.
51............22.

52............151.
xii, 6..........138.
9............189.
10...........156.
11–12........19, 162.
13–30........36.
13–21........8.
13–15........115.
14...........132.
16–20........176.
22–28........176.
32–34........17.
50...........192.
xiii, 1–5........138, 169.
10–17........13.
18–19........162.
20–21........162.
20...........163.
22...........55.
31–33........8.
31...........191.
xiv, 1..........184.
23...........25.
26...........189.
28–32........189.
xv.............151.
xv, 7..........42.
8–10.........8.
xvi, 17–18......15.
17...........122.
xvii, 11–19.....13.
20–37........21.
xviii, 3.........186.
10–14........148 *ff.*
xix, 10..........42.
xx, 36.........135.
xxi, 15.........18, 39.
16...........12.
18–19........12.
20–21........12.
xxii, 28–30.....21, 189 *f.*
35–38........194.
69...........195.
xxiii, 1–5.......168 *ff.*
xxiv, 47........25, 198.
John—
i, 8.............74.
21–23........74.
34...........74.
ii, 4............64.
21...........173.
iii, 22–30.......74.
iv, 22..........66.
vi, 1–26........63 *ff.*
vii, 6–10.......64.
viii, 56.........155.
59...........65.
x, 39...........65.
xi, 6...........64.
35...........66.
xviii, 8–9.......194.
33–38........167.
xix, 7..........167.
21...........166.
xx, 21..........198.
Acts—
i, 3.............198.
8............198.
ii, 17–20.......162.
22...........43.
30...........29.
iii, 21..........29.
22–23........30.
v, 36...........25.
vi, 1...........37.
vii, 37.........30.
53...........112.
ix, 2...........31.
x, 38...........43.
xii, 12.........7.
xiii, 13.........6.
23...........29.
xv, 39.........7.
xviii, 26........31.
xxi, 8–15.......10.
24...........25.
Romans—
ii, 9............142.
11...........142.
v, 3–5.........138.
viii, 15.........105.
xii, 20.........127 *f.*
xiii, 8–10.......124.
xiv, 14.........124.

I Corinthians—
- vii.............39.
- vii, 10.........126.
  - 15...........126.
  - 25...........54.
- xii, 28.........43, 53.
- xv, 5–7........198.
  - 5............187.

Galatians—
- ii, 6...........5.
  - 9............124.
  - 14...........124.
- iii, 19..........112, 114.

Ephesians—
- iv, 11..........54.

Philippians—
- iii, 6...........101.

Colossians—
- iv, 10..........7.

II Timothy—
- iv, 11..........7.

Hebrews—
- ii, 2............112.
- xii, 7–11.......138.

Revelation—
- xi, 8............12.

THE HALE LECTURES

The Rt. Rev. Charles Reuben Hale, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of Cairo, Bishop Coadjutor of Springfield, was born in 1837, consecrated Bishop in 1892, and died on Christmas Day in the year 1900.

In his will he bequeathed to Western Theological Seminary, now of Evanston, Ill., a fund to be held in trust "for the general purpose of promoting the Catholic Faith, in its purity and integrity, as taught in Holy Scripture, held by the Primitive Church, summed up in the Creeds, and affirmed by the undisputed General Councils, and, in particular, to be used only and exclusively for the establishment, endowment, printing, and due circulation of a yearly Sermon . . . and . . . of Courses of Lectures."

The subjects of the Lectures specified by Bishop Hale are the following: (a) Liturgies and Liturgics, (b) Church Hymns and Church Music, (c) The History of the Eastern Churches, (d) The History of National Churches, and (e) Contemporaneous Church History. The Seminary is thus in a position to present and to publish lectures on a wide range of theological subjects.

The following courses have thus far been delivered upon this Foundation:

Church Hymns and Church Music. By Peter C. Lutkin, Mus.D., A.G.O. Dean of the School of Music, Northwestern University. 1908.

The National Church of Sweden. By the Rt. Rev. John Wordsworth, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of Salisbury. 1910.

Biographical Studies in Scottish Church History. By the Rt. Rev. Anthony Mitchell, D.D., Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney. 1913.

The Ethiopic Liturgy: Its Sources, Development, and Present Form. By the Rev. Samuel A. B. Mercer, D.D., Ph.D., Professor of Semitics, University of Toronto. 1915.

Some Aspects of Contemporary Greek Orthodox Thought. By the Rev. Frank Gavin, M.A., Ph.D., Th.D., Professor of Church History, General Theological Seminary. 1921.

New Horizons of the Christian Faith. By the Very Rev. Frederick C. Grant, D.D., S.T.D., Dean of Western Theological Seminary. 1928.

Christ in the Gospels. By the Rev. Burton Scott Easton, S.T.D., Ph.D., Professor of the Literature and Interpretation of the New Testament, General Theological Seminary. 1930.

Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries
1 1012 01198 6009

Date Due

Mr 28 '38
Ja 11 '39
FACULTY
FACULTY
FACULTY
MR 26 '51
2 weeks
JUN 15 1977